Ministry of Foreign Affairs

IOB Evaluation

Opening doors and unlocking potential

Key lessons from an evaluation of support for Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy (PILA)

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September 2015

‘Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.’

(no confirmed attribution found)

Preface

The quote on the previous page captures the essence of processes of *Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy* (PILA): they are dynamic, unpredictable and long-term. There is no blueprint for success; stakeholders should be open to trial and inevitable error and realize that influencing change requires stamina and perseverance.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has made a bold move by focusing its future policy on support for PILA capacity development of local organizations to strengthen their role in claiming inclusive, just and sustainable development. The global trend of decreasing space for civil society engagement on issues ranging from workers' and women's rights to the wellbeing of children indicates that such support is much needed. However, PILA is also a sensitive matter, and there is little information available on how to go about it.

The paramount purpose of this evaluation was to learn, which is why this report focuses prominently on the lessons to be learned. Moreover, the researchers deliberately shared their findings on the factors contributing to PILA success or failure early on in the evaluation process. Thus, they can be incorporated in the policy process and program design phase of the strategic partnerships between the Ministry and Dutch development organizations, which will come into effect as of 2016. From this perspective, the evaluation has already proven to be a worthwhile investment.

IOB evaluator Piet de Lange and IOB researcher Anique Claessen conducted the evaluation. IOB evaluator Floris Blankenberg coordinated the country studies, which were executed by local consultants Katia Taela (Mozambique) and Kasmil Masheti (Kenya). Dr. Luc Fransen (University of Amsterdam) and Danielle de Winter (DBMresearch) performed a thematic study of PILA in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Prof. Dr. Arco Timmermans (Leiden University), assisted by Max Schmalzl, conducted a literature review on PILA in fields related to but outside of development cooperation. In addition, the evaluation draws on studies executed by ACE Europe, as part of the IOB policy evaluation on women's rights and gender equality, and by Wageningen University and Research Center on the ILA evaluation as part of the so-called MFS II evaluation.[1]

The evaluation was guided by a reference group chaired by Geert Geut, IOB's deputy director. The reference group consisted of external experts Manuela Monteiro (ex-director of Hivos), Dr. Nadia Molenaers (University of Antwerp) and Prof. Dr. Arco Timmermans (Leiden University) and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands: the Social Development Department (DSO) and the Department of International Trade Policy

1 MFS II has been the 2011-2015 grant framework for Co-Financing Agencies (CFAs). A total of 20 alliances of Dutch CFAs were awarded EUR 1.9 billion in MFS II grants by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. CFAs receiving MFS II funding work through partnerships with Southern partner organizations supporting a wide range of development activities in over 70 countries and at the global policy level. Stichting Gezamenlijke Evaluaties [SGE] (2015). MFS II Evaluations: Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011-2015. Civil society contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Synthesis Report.

and Economic Governance (IMH). IOB evaluators Otto Genee, Floris Blankenberg and Bas Limonard (since April 2015) acted as internal peer reviewers. All have provided invaluable comments and advice. Marita van Rijssen and IOB desk editor Jochem Hemink provided valuable comments regarding language and editing.

The men and women working for local PILA organizations frequently face circumstances that are both difficult and dangerous. Their genuine efforts to improve conditions from within their countries deserve national and international recognition and support.

The final responsibility for the content of this evaluation report lies with IOB.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACPF	African Child Policy Forum
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACT Alliance	Action by Churches Together Alliance
AFFC	Africa Fit for Children
AGIR	*Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável* (Program for Inclusive, Responsible Governance, Mozambique)
AU	African Union
BIS	*Bureau Internationale Samenwerking* (Office for International Cooperation, MFA)
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCC	Clean Clothes Campaign
CCC IS	Clean Clothes Campaign International Secretariat
CD	Capacity Development
CFA	Co-Financing Agency
CFI	Child Friendliness Index
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDSE	*Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité*, Catholic International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity
CIVICUS	CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
COWI	COWI Leading consulting group with a 360° approach
CPD	Commission on Population and Development (UN)
CS	Civil Society
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Charities and Societies Proclamation (Ethiopia)
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DCD	Dutch Coal Dialogue
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DIÁLOGO	*Diálogo Local para a Boa Governaçao* (Democratic Governance Support Program, Mozambique)
DSO	*Directie Sociale Ontwikkeling* (Social Development Department, Dutch MFA)
EA	Ecosystem Alliance
EAA	Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EICC	Electronics Industry Citizenship Coalition
EKN	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EU	European Union
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FGG	Fair Green and Global alliance
FNV	*Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging* (The Netherlands Trade Union Confederation)
FNVM	FNV *Mondiaal* (from 2015 onwards: *Mondiaal FNV*)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HRW	Human Rights Watch

IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
IDH	*Initiatief Duurzame Handel* (Sustainable Trade Initiative)
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IEG	International Evaluation Group
ILA	International Lobbying and Advocacy
ILC	International Land Coalition
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOB	*Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie* (Policy and Operations Evaluation Department
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IT	Information Technology
ITAD	ITAD Monitoring & Evaluation for International Development
IWHC	International Women's Health Coalition
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
L&A	Lobbying & Advocacy
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDG3	MDG number 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFS II	*Medefinancieringsstelsel* (Netherlands Co-Financing System, 2nd term, 2011-2015)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPs	Members of Parliament
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	OECD – Development Assistance Committee
Oxfam GB	Oxfam Great Britain
PAX	IKV Pax Christi
PBO	Public Benefits Organization Act (Kenya)
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PILA	Policy Influencing, Lobbying & Advocacy
PM&E	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (*Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete*)
SOMO	*Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen* (Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
T4C	Together for Change Alliance

ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UFBR	Unite for Body Rights Program of the SRHR Alliance
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHRC	United National Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States (of America)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WUR	Wageningen University & Research Centre

Highlights

An increasing number of donors have rediscovered the important role civil society plays in creating the political conditions for achieving sustainable development.

The Netherlands follows this international trend. In her letter to parliament, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation reconfirms her commitment to a strong role for civil society. The minister believes that civil society has the ability to place topics of general interest on the agenda of governments and the private sector locally, nationally and internationally. The underlying assumption is that civil society contributes to decision-making that better reflects the collective interest. However, the role of civil society and its organizations is not uncontested. Moreover, little systematic knowledge is available about the effectiveness of donor support provided for lobbying and advocacy, or about the factors leading to or impeding its success. The main evaluation question to be answered in this evaluation is therefore:

> *What are the lessons for donors and Northern non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) to improve the effectiveness of their support to Southern civil society organizations' (CSOs') capacity to practice Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy (PILA)?*

IOB concludes that CSOs succeed to varying degrees in placing issues higher on the agenda and in influencing policy. However, policy implementation, let alone impact on the ground, is far more difficult to realize. Restrictive environments for PILA engagement and limited capacity of Southern CSOs explain lower levels of effectiveness. Another conclusion is that Southern CSOs appreciate Dutch support. The support, however, is not strategic, as it does not address issues such as Southern CSOs' questionable political and social legitimacy. Dilemmas in policy priorities and varying knowledge and experience within the Ministry pose additional challenges for effective support.

This report provides lessons that are generally applicable to improving the effectiveness of support for PILA capacity development. PILA support could be more effective if the insights generated by this evaluation were addressed systematically by all actors, including donors, Northern NGDOs en Southern CSOs.

Lessons for dealing with restrictive environments
- Donors can help defend the operating space for conducting PILA.
- A Theory of Change based on political economy analysis is indispensable.
- Customized approaches are required as are experiments. Donors need to allow room for failure.
- Coalitions pursuing a common goal are paramount.

Lessons for improving PILA capacity development
- Donors and Northern NGDOs should give precedence to Southern CSOs' ownership.
- Southern CSOs need sound monitoring and evaluation systems for learning.

1

Introduction to the evaluation

Readers' guide
Section 1.1 briefly introduces the rationale for the evaluation and the main evaluation question.

Section 1.2 introduces some key concepts that are critical for understanding the next chapters.

Section 1.3 explains how this report is organized.

1.1 An evaluation designed for learning

The main purpose of this evaluation is to contribute to insights and lessons that may support the development of lobbying and advocacy policies and in particular to gain a better understanding of how the Ministry may best support CSOs in developing countries, working on PILA.

An increasing number of donors have rediscovered the important role civil society plays in creating the political conditions for achieving sustainable development. Donors recognize that a strong, independent civil society is an essential part of a democratic system, which they assume will ultimately lead to good governance and pro-poor development. This change in donor policy follows a period of some decades in which it was generally assumed that poverty could be reduced by combining sectoral and general budget support to governments of developing countries with influencing government policy, often by donors imposing their conditions for making budgets available.

In 2013, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation chose a new direction in the Ministry's policy on financial support to civil society, which will come into effect in 2016. This policy commitment reflects a broader trend, as many international development organizations are increasingly turning to policy influence and advocacy work as a means of realizing sustainable, transformative change (Tsui, Hearn & Young, 2014). In its letter to parliament on cooperation with civil society in a new context, the Dutch government reconfirmed its commitment to a strong role for civil society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). It believes that civil society can place topics of general interest on the agenda of governments and the private sector, locally, nationally and internationally. The underlying idea is that in doing so, civil society contributes to decision-making that reflects the collective interest. The letter stressed that the state and markets function better when they include social issues in their decisions.

Funding from the Ministry for Dutch civil society organizations (CSOs) focuses on support for developing the PILA capacity of CSOs through so-called strategic partnerships. The Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation chose this direction in order to strengthen the watchdog role and policy influencing capacity of local civil society in developing countries. This choice was also based on considerations of additionality, as it

is generally more difficult for CSOs to attract funding for PILA work than for service delivery or technical assistance, for example.

However, the role of civil society and its organizations is not uncontested. Some authors argue that civil society is not something homogenous and inherently good, but may also inhibit groups that contradict sustainable development. Others argue that civil society is a Western concept that may not necessarily apply elsewhere, and many authors also question the legitimacy of CSOs whose future depends on donor funding.

Decisions of donors to support PILA are mainly politically motivated, but are hardly substantiated by evidence on the effectiveness of donor assistance. Little systematic knowledge and information are available about the effectiveness of support for lobbying and advocacy, nor about the factors leading to or impeding success. At the Ministry, lobbying and advocacy activities have not been recorded as such in the financial systems and no monitoring and evaluation framework available.

The main evaluation question to be answered is:

What are the lessons for donors and Northern NGDOs to improve the effectiveness of their support to Southern CSOs' capacity to practice PILA?

1.2 Some important concepts

Civil society

When we speak of civil society we refer to organizations of people that exist between state bodies and the market or corporate sector on the one hand and the private sphere (families, individuals) on the other. Civil society encompasses civil society organizations (CSOs), including non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs), less formalized groups and civil actions of individuals. Some CSOs promote socio-political or socio-economic agendas – by representing interests, advocating policies or monitoring powerful institutions. Other CSOs provide social, spiritual or recreational services. Civil society's agency is often described as the power of people to pursue a shared agenda for improving the world.

Most civil society organizations (CSOs) that were studied in this evaluation can be classified in the more limited category of non-governmental development organization (NGDO).[2] There is no universal definition or uncontested description of NGDOs; the term covers a plethora of organizations whose common denominator is that they are non-governmental and work, in one way or the other, to contribute to development. NGDOs act as intermediaries between resource providers and people whose situations justify the provision of resources.

[2] According to Kamstra (2014), it turns out that in practice donors mostly support this more specifically defined category within CSOs. 'Within civil society, donors direct most of their funding to NGOs [NGDOs] for bringing about all the merits of civil society' (Kamstra, 2014: 157).

Policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy (PILA)

The term policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy (PILA) is often used as an umbrella term, covering a range of activities.

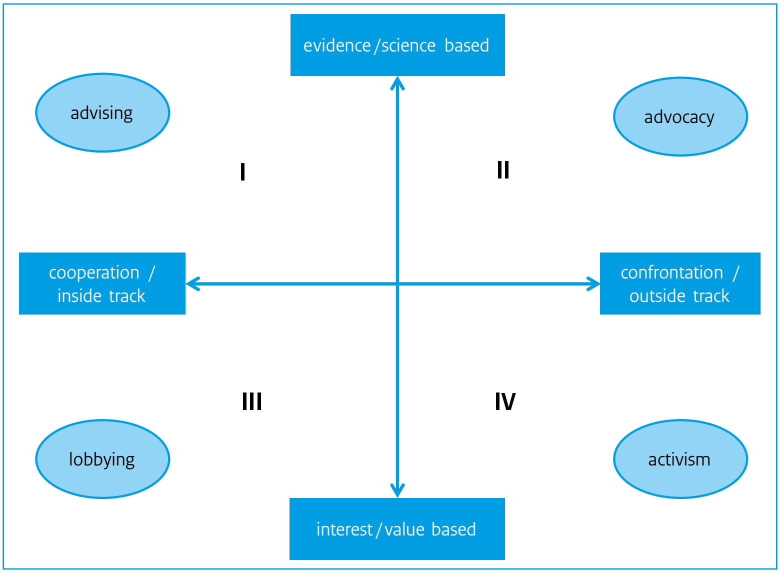
IOB applies the following definition in this evaluation:

> *Policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy covers a wide range of activities conducted to influence decision-makers in the public and private sectors at international, national or local levels towards the overall aim of combating the structural causes of poverty and injustice and contributing to sustainable inclusive development.*

With this definition, this report distinguishes between PILA and what IOB labels as supportive functions, which include: knowledge; freedom of expression, assembly and association; a strong parliament and civic engagement. Supportive functions are necessary for PILA to be effective and can simultaneously be strengthened when PILA activities are conducted.

It is important to realize that policy influencing may involve different strategies (Figure 1). These strategies are further elaborated on in Chapter 12.

Figure 1 *PILA strategies*



Source: IOB, adapted from Start and Hovland (2004).

1.3 Outline of the report

The structure of this report was inspired by the Pyramid Principle© (Minto, 2009). The headings of the chapters reflect the evaluation questions and the headings of the supporting sections reflect the responses to these questions. Readers can, if they wish, limit themselves to reading Chapter 2 and the summary of each chapter to get a feel for the conclusions and lessons.

This report begins by answering the main evaluation question in Chapter 2. The first section of this chapter presents the conclusions on effectiveness and explaining factors on which these lessons are based. Subsequently, Chapter 2 describes lessons for improving support to PILA capacity. The lessons are primarily addressed to donors, but also to the Northern NGDOs and Southern CSOs. Chapter 3 discusses the Dutch PILA policy and how it has developed over the years. Chapters 4 to 7 present the findings on effectiveness of CSOs' PILA from different case studies within the evaluation research. The studies include three thematic studies: corporate social responsibility (Fransen & De Winter, 2015), gender equality (IOB, 2015a) and international lobbying and advocacy (Arensman et al., 2015). In addition, IOB commissioned two country studies: Mozambique (Taela, 2015) and Kenya. Chapter 8 elaborates on some key findings on capacity development for PILA of individual CSOs as well as networks and coalitions. Chapters 9 and 10 discuss the main factors that explain levels of PILA effectiveness: context and capacity. Chapter 11 describes how donor support influences PILA capacity development and discusses the effectiveness of donor support in general and of Dutch support in particular. Chapter 12 provides some background on the evaluation design and methodological aspects.

The annexes provide more background on IOB as an organization, the original evaluation design (Terms of Reference), criteria for assessing CSO's capacity regarding PILA, a comparison of the past and future PILA budget and research material substantiating the conclusions of this report. Several reports of the country studies and thematic studies may be accessed for further reference. These annexes can be found on the IOB website, but are not included in the evaluation report itself.

2

What are the conclusions and lessons from the evaluation?

Summary

This chapter provides answers to the main question of this evaluation: 'What are the lessons for donors and Northern NGDOs to improve the effectiveness of their support to Southern CSOs' capacity to practice PILA?' The evaluation draws three conclusions on levels of effectiveness, explaining factors and ways in which donor support influences PILA capacity development. The conclusions drawn yield six lessons for improving the effectiveness of support to PILA capacity. These lessons address the two main issues hampering PILA effectiveness: restrictive environment and limited capacity of southern CSOs.

IOB concludes that CSOs succeed in placing issues higher on the agenda and in influencing policy to various degrees. However, influencing policy implementation, let alone impact on the ground, is far more difficult to realize. Restrictive environments for PILA engagement and limited capacity of Southern CSOs explain lower levels of effectiveness. Another conclusion is that Southern CSOs appreciate Dutch support. It is, however, not strategic as it did not address issues such as Southern CSOs' questionable political and social legitimacy. Dilemmas in policy priorities and varying knowledge and experience within the Ministry pose an additional challenge for effective support.

Four lessons provide guidance for dealing with restrictive environments:
- *Donors can help defend the operating space for conducting PILA;*
- *A Theory of Change based on political economy analysis is indispensable;*
- *Customized approaches are required as are experiments. Donors need to allow room for failure;*
- *Coalitions pursuing a common goal are paramount.*

Two lessons serve to improve PILA capacity development:
- *Donors and Northern NGDOs should give precedence to Southern CSOs' ownership;*
- *Southern CSOs need sound monitoring and evaluation systems for learning.*

Reader's guide
Section 2.1 presents the three conclusions on levels of effectiveness, based on the three thematic studies and two country studies (Chapters 4-8), explaining factors (Chapters 9-10) and ways in which donor support influences PILA capacity development (Chapter 11). These conclusions constitute the foundation of the lessons for improving the effectiveness of support to PILA capacity.

Sections 2.2-2.8 present six lessons for improving the effectiveness of support to PILA capacity that follow from the conclusions drawn. These lessons address two important issues that hamper PILA effectiveness: restrictive environments and limited PILA capacity development.

The conclusions and lessons of this evaluation respond to concerns about civil society that can be found in literature. They may raise questions about the relevance of supporting CSOs' PILA. Prominent concerns are that civil society is not homogenous or inherently good, it is seen as a Western concept that may not necessarily apply elsewhere, and the legitimacy of CSOs is questioned. From that point of view, IOB assumes that the lessons in report address both the relevance and the effectiveness of donor support.

As there is no blueprint for success, this report refrains from drawing specific lessons. Context-specific strategies and solutions are required given the complexity of PILA. The policy area is characterized by a multitude of stakeholders and actors, complex political and socio-economic contexts and unexpected changes taking place. Consequently, the lessons provide directions for improvement of support, but it is up to the stakeholders to learn from them and translate them into concrete measures tailored to their situation.

IOB recognizes that the success of any organization is determined first and foremost by its staff and leadership and their determination and commitment to success. Furthermore, the findings of the evaluation confirm insights that are already well known to organizations with long-term PILA experience. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in practice. IOB believes PILA support could be more effective if the insights generated by this evaluation were addressed systematically by all actors, including donors, Northern NGDOs and Southern CSOs.

2.1 Conclusions on effectiveness of PILA support and explaining factors

1) CSOs succeed in placing issues higher on the agenda and in influencing policy to varying degrees. However, policy implementation, let alone impact on the ground, is far more difficult to realize.
From the thematic case study on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), IOB has learned that Dutch CSOs' PILA campaigns have contributed to raising labor issues higher on the agenda of companies in The Netherlands and abroad. The campaigns have also contributed to the development of specific CSR policies in companies. Furthermore, many PILA activities were

followed up by opportunities for CSOs to influence further thinking within companies and across industries. In some cases, regular interactions between CSOs and companies have affected the way companies deal with labor standards in supply chains. CSOs' campaigns also contributed to active positions of the Dutch government towards promotion of labor standards by Dutch industries.

In each of the three case studies of the CSR study, the Dutch commercial interest or market share were too small to have the leverage required to make an impact on the ground and to improve the desired labor conditions. Thus, the establishment of international initiatives and coalitions are essential next steps to create the necessary scale for this kind of leverage.

Furthermore, the historical evolution of PILA campaigns proves to play an important role in PILA effectiveness. The extent to which there is a sound ToC, cooperation and strong (international) partnerships with likeminded CSOs and open interaction between CSOs and companies, is likely to grow during the course of a campaign. Another factor determining effectiveness is the degree to which citizens or consumers are aware of a CSR issue and let this affect their purchasing behavior.

The thematic study on gender equality shows us that donor support has contributed to putting gender issues on the political agenda, as well as to improvements in legal frameworks. Donor support also contributed to enhanced knowledge of traditional leaders, government representatives and community members. However, policy change and enhanced knowledge alone are not enough, as social and cultural values, standards and practices constitute the root causes of women's discrimination. Changing these standards and practices proves to be difficult.

The thematic study on international lobbying and advocacy draws attention to the discrepancy between high-level policy discussions in international forums and the local challenges for CSOs engaged in for example children's rights and wellbeing at community level. The local reality appears far removed from the good intentions expressed in the international forums. The question arises who will bridge the gap between global policy discussions and local realities by seeking ground level translations.

In Kenya, most CSO efforts have focused on creating space and developing the basic structures necessary for PILA, rather than on conducting PILA campaigns. Despite this setback, Kenyan CSOs have been able to influence some agendas, mainly through working in coalitions and by joining networks.

CSOs' PILA in Mozambique was successful in combatting violence against women and corruption, promoting women's political participation and enhancing transparency of MPs pension schemes. Government officials are starting to recognize the role of CSOs. However, once CSOs succeed in influencing policy, the bigger challenge is to have these policies budgeted and implemented.

2) Restrictive environments and limited capacity of Southern CSOs explain lower levels of effectiveness.
The environment in which Southern CSOs operate, is one of the major factors to explain PILA effectiveness, as it determines the conditions in which CSOs' PILA takes place and therefore the possibilities for success or failure. The capacity of CSOs to handle these contextual factors is another element that determines effectiveness. The CSO's Theory of Change and the choice of strategies are particularly important aspects.

Restrictive environments
The environment for civil society, which requires freedom of expression and the freedom to associate and assemble, is under pressure in many countries. In certain countries the environment is so restrictive that CSOs fear for their existence and staff members for their lives. The restrictions seriously hamper CSOs' PILA campaigns and thus the extent to which they are able to achieve their PILA goals. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the space available to engage in PILA varies within countries. For example, CSOs whose agendas align with the government's development agenda are invited to participate in policy discussions, whereas CSOs who try to engage in matters of governance and democracy have to fight for space and must create their own influencing opportunities.
Findings show that CSOs continue their PILA activities despite the opposition and persecution they face. However, they have to go about it carefully and strategically, with cooperative strategies being the only feasible approach. Aspects that are particularly important for effective PILA in restrictive environments are: 1) civic engagement, because creating strong support is key; 2) national networks; and 3) international contacts, for example with donors.

The two country studies in Kenya and Mozambique illustrate that the political economic context in a country is often underestimated. Political economy analysis (PEA) is an important tool to help achieve a better understanding and it provides for more realistic prospects and mechanisms for change. In practice, however, solid PEAs are often missing or outdated.

Capacity limitations
The country studies in Kenya and Mozambique also show that CSOs respond quickly when issues emerge or when they are invited to advise government. However, their ability to remain on course is weak, as is the coherence of their actions under duress. This is explained by the fact that most of them tend to react to issues and incidences that pop up, besides experiencing a dependency on donor agendas.

CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique that were part of this evaluation tend to have weak connections with the communities they claim to work for and represent – the poor and marginalized people. Their ability to identify with those groups and develop and maintain relations with them is seriously at stake. In addition, CSOs experience problems with working in coalitions, which are generally weak or tend to fall apart. These weaknesses combined make CSOs vulnerable and less effective when contexts are restrictive.

IOB also learned that developing capacity for PILA is an evolutionary process, founded on a particular CSO's work and experiences. Tacit knowledge, the informal knowledge of how and why things work, is an essential part of this. Regular reflection based on a ToC helps to systematize this knowledge and make it available for broader application. However, much capacity development is centered on training, although little is known about whether the skills and knowledge acquired in these trainings permeate in the operations of the CSOs and improve their effectiveness. Strengthening CSO capacity by systematic reflection on which PILA strategies and activities may work and are effective in realizing the organization's objectives, is generally underutilized.

3) Southern CSOs appreciate Dutch support although it is not strategic. Dilemmas in policy priorities and varying knowledge and experience within the Ministry pose an additional challenge.

The complex nature of PILA poses extra challenges for donors, as it requires them to thoroughly understand the context in which they provide support. The findings in Kenya and Mozambique indicate that donors primarily fund their own priorities, often relating to their own thematic policy choices. These choices do not necessarily reflect the priorities of the CSOs they support. Furthermore, mobilization of citizens through social media and mobile communications often bypasses formal CSOs. This presents new challenges to donors, as it is difficult for them to reach more informal civil society groups.

Donors tend to equate civil society with CSOs and support has focused on professionalized organizations. This means that they exclude other organizations that may be more successful in mobilizing the population, such as informal groups or religious organizations. Furthermore, donors generally neglect Parliament as a state interlocutor, particularly in light of the overall support that is provided to state institutions. There is a risk of diluting the Parliament's law-making role and of the Executive taking over the Legislative.

The CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique that were part of the study, appreciate the direct funding they receive from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN). The Dutch embassies' flexibility, the fact that it finances what others do not and its willingness to take on sensitive issues are highly recognized by the local CSOs. Furthermore, the EKN's support is often institutional, rather than aimed at financing specific PILA campaigns. However, IOB concludes that the EKN's funding in these two countries is not strategic, as it does not address key concerns regarding PILA capacity, such as CSOs' questionable political and social legitimacy.

When it comes to capacity development of Southern partners, Northern NGDOs, including the Dutch, have a complex role. It is difficult to achieve relationships based on equality or real involvement from Southern partners, because of Northern NGDOs' own PILA campaigns, the envisaged results and the financial dependency. This puts Southern CSOs' ownership at stake.

There is a dilemma regarding the duality in goals of the Dutch policy framework. On the one hand, the Ministry supports the development of PILA capacity of local CSOs as a goal in itself, as is emphasized by the embassies and the Department for Social Development (DSO).

On the other, the Ministry supports PILA as an instrument to achieve specific thematic or sectorial development goals, which is emphasized by the thematic departments at the Ministry. Furthermore, the aid and trade agenda inhibits interests that are not always easy to align. National economic and security interests may for example be at odds with issues of human rights and democracy, which focus on strengthening PILA capacity. If such a trade-off arises, donors should make conscious choices about which interest prevails.

The fact that the knowledge and experience regarding PILA varies considerably within the Ministry poses a risk. IOB observes that substantial knowledge was built through the policymaking process in DSO. But so far, this has not reached far into the thematic departments, responsible for shaping and implementing the partnerships. This also applies to the Dutch embassies, that are responsible for providing funding for PILA directly to CSOs in developing countries.

2.2 Lesson 1: donors can help defend the operating space for conducting PILA

The evaluation found that the environment for civil society to conduct PILA is becoming more restrictive in many countries around the world. The freedom of expression, assembly and association – required for civil society – is often threatened. This even happens in countries were the constitution and legislation formally provide for the liberty to conduct PILA. From this angle, databases such as the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index (EEI) or the Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index do not give an entirely accurate picture of what is really going on in many countries.

Donors can play a role in defending the space if it becomes seriously restricted. However, the influence of individual donors in the countries concerned is becoming ever more limited. Donors may therefore need to mobilize broader coalitions to build up sufficient leverage. The EU and the UN could be logical entry points for this. The Dutch Ministry's large international network of CSOs that is part of its 25 strategic partnerships is an extra asset that could be of great value in this respect. The Ministry may wish to deliberate with its strategic partners on how to make the most of this network.

Donors and Northern NGDOs may need to rethink how best to support CSOs in countries with a restrictive environment. It might imply jeopardizing other interests, and results are unlikely to be grand and clear, making support politically sensitive at home and abroad. Even though donors' influence may be modest, it can sometimes be important, for example when providing political backing. Unfortunately, donors are often very cautious in challenging diminishing freedom and the lack of political space to enhance civil society engagement. Furthermore, legal provisions for participation do not necessarily work, unless people feel able to claim the space and are helped to do this productively. Therefore, it is important to empower those directly affected by a policy so they can turn engagement opportunities into action.

2.3 Lesson 2: a Theory of Change based on political economy analysis is imperative

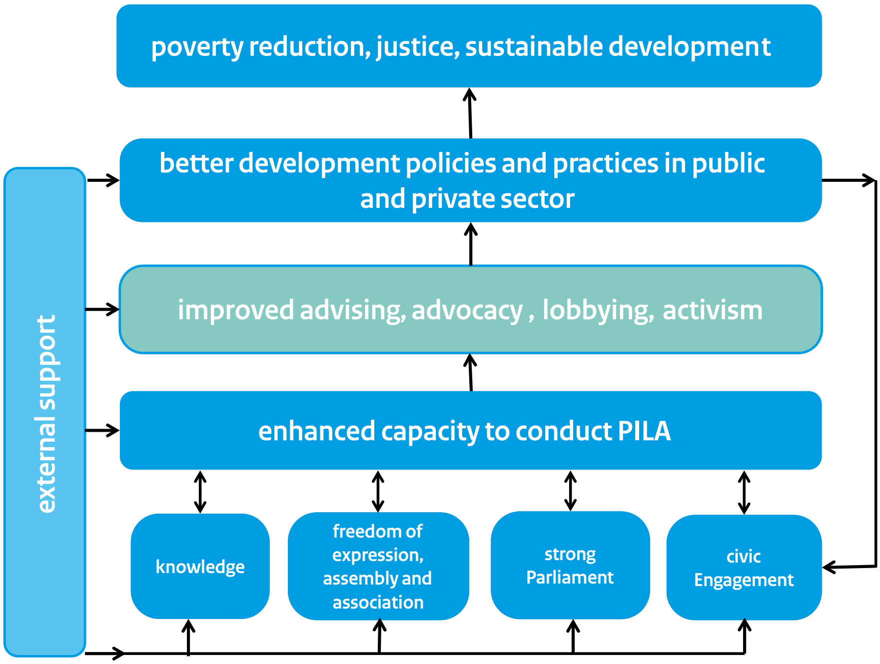
The trend of diminishing space for CSOs implies that it is very important to gain a thorough understanding of the environment in which they operate. CSOs must keep track of political and socio-economic changes and should monitor the few margins that remain to conduct their PILA work. It is therefore imperative that they conduct political economy analyses (PEAs) on a continuous basis. PEAs analyze the broader context, including the culture and existing power relations, before placing a demarcated intervention in that context. Assumptions about behavior, the underlying mechanisms at work and the context that supports an intervention are made explicit and are supported by evidence as much as possible.

The historical evolution of a PILA campaign and the extent to which a sound Theory of Change (ToC) was developed have a positive influence on the effectiveness of PILA. IOB learned this from the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) case study and the country case studies. However, the formulation of a ToC is something new for many CSOs, as well as for their donors. Often, their pathways to change are not explicitly described and underlying assumptions are hardly made explicit. This is unfortunate, because the findings from the CSR cases show that most effective PILA is observable in cases where the ToC is specific with regard to demands, targeting, mechanisms and assumptions. A ToC also explains which strategies are most suitable for reaching out to the support base and which partners are needed to gather enough power to counter the status quo. It also implies that CSOs and their donors think beyond traditional interventions and might consider working in unconventional ways with unconventional partners. A ToC matures through experience and is colored by the context. This requires a willingness to learn from CSOs, as well as the space to act on lessons learned and adjust policies and strategies if necessary. An important pitfall consists of implicit and/or flawed assumptions underlying the ToC.

As a contribution to the development of ToCs for PILA this report presents the generic ToC, which IOB has revised on the basis of insights from this evaluation (Figure 2).[3]

[3] The revisions are elaborated on in the last chapter of this report (paragraph 12.2).

Figure 2 *Revised generic Theory of Change.*



Source: IOB.

During the preparatory phase of the evaluation, IOB formulated assumptions underlying the generic ToC (attached to the Terms of Reference, Annex 2), based on the framework outlining future government PILA policy. The evaluation clearly shows that these assumptions may hold in various degrees, depending on the circumstances and the actors involved.

The assumptions underlying the generic ToC were formulated as follows:

- better development policies in the public and private sector are needed;
- policymakers recognize civil society as a legitimate representation of the population;
- local, national and global structures allow for avenues through which change can be pursued: various strategies of PILA, aimed at different actors;
- civil society plays a critical role in influencing policymaking processes;
- civil society actors have the capacity to seize windows of opportunities;
- the general population recognizes CSOs as their legitimate representatives;
- for their PILA activities, civil society organizations require locally generated knowledge, freedom of expression and civic engagement;
- donors recognize the importance of PILA and offer support;
- donors can identify and financially support civil society organizations that play a key role in influencing policymakers in the public and private sector.

In some cases, these assumptions are questionable, which means they pose serious risks for effective PILA. For example, in many authoritarian regimes and restrictive environments, governments do not recognize civil society as a legitimate representation of the population. Furthermore, the assumption that the general population recognizes CSOs as their legitimate representatives is problematic, as they often feel there is a gap between CSOs' PILA campaigns and the local needs and realities. Moreover, especially at the grassroots level, CSOs are often faced with capacity constraints, limiting the effectiveness of their PILA. On the other hand, the evaluation shows that CSOs have been able to exert some influence on political agendas and policies. To various degrees, local, national and global structures exist through which CSOs can participate in policy discussions and change can be pursued. Furthermore, donors seem to give more weight to the political dimension of aid; they recognize the importance of PILA and offer support.

2.4 Lesson 3: customized approaches are required and donors should allow room for failure

Donors have to tune down their ambitions to realistic levels and CSOs must report honestly about success, failure and lessons learnt. The evaluation has found that it can take years or even decades before PILA results in policy changes, or even in getting issues on the agenda. Moreover, it is often unpredictable when policy change will occur. One should even consider the possibility that envisaged changes do not occur at all. The long-term and unpredictable nature of PILA processes and results have implications for all development actors involved. It raises the question of what can realistically be expected within a certain timeframe, which is partially dependent on the starting point and context.

For donors and Northern NGDOs this implies that support should be long-term, or should at least be seen as a contribution to processes that may take much longer than their own financial budgeting cycles. Donors should therefore ensure solidity and continuity of their policies. It also implies that one should be realistic about the achievable results and that indicators should also reflect intermediate results. Since it is uncertain when results will occur, it would be advisable to accommodate a certain degree of flexibility in the PILA program design and implementation process. Then, routes that prove less fruitful may be exchanged for avenues where opportunities arise.

For CSOs this implies that the design of PILA campaigns must be realistic about the sphere of influence. It needs to be based on a deep understanding of the incentives of specific lobby targets to change. CSOs have to think about the changes that could actually be achieved and should not fall into the trap of inflating expected results to satisfy unrealistic donor expectations.

2.5 Lesson 4: coalitions pursuing a common goal are paramount

IOB has learned from the evaluation that it is becoming increasingly difficult for individual Southern CSOs to be effective in their PILA campaigns. Their legitimacy is often at stake and the large interests of the corporate sector and the harsher environment in which Southern CSOs have to operate require a heavier countervailing power. CSOs that receive donor support (NGDOs) face two constraints: 1) their claim to represent the interests of a constituency is seriously questioned; and 2) the coalitions in which they work are weak or tend to fall apart. Unless they are able to overcome these two constraints, CSOs risk being portrayed as a foreign agent and becoming further sidelined. Furthermore, blurring boundaries between state, market and civil society require rethinking of appropriate practices.

Southern CSOs have several options to strengthen their position. They may revise their strategies; involve and mobilize their constituency systematically; link with other CSOs with more legitimacy in representing citizens' interests; support their work with more evidence-based research; and operate in local, national and international networks and coalitions that add value to their work. Furthermore, it is possible to derive legitimacy from other matters than a strong support base, for example from universal values, new ideas, knowledge and technical expertise or service delivery experience. Issues such as environment and sustainability are not widely supported generally, for example, and yet they are important for all. And promoting human rights can be difficult when it comes to LGBT issues, even though coverage should be universal.

However, even though PILA work that lacks a clear or wide support base can be important and legitimate, the nature and base of claims may determine the feasibility of PILA strategies, and CSOs have to consider this carefully. It may be enough to be an expert to advise policymakers, but at some point it is necessary to convene power to create leverage or to speak up when working under the radar proves to render insufficient results.

Donors can stimulate CSOs to enhance their legitimacy by reflecting on issues concerning constituencies and building a firm support base, whether derived from popular support, outstanding expertise or dedication to sensitive themes. Moreover, donors can encourage CSOs to work in strong and lasting coalitions that pursue a common goal. This means supporting cooperation and coordination, perhaps even facilitating networking and coalition building, but it does not mean intruding in and steering cooperative processes.

The relationship between donors, Northern NGDOs and Southern CSOs is of the utmost importance and work is needed to ensure it is based on symmetry and equality. IOB suggests that in assessing their relations with partners, donors and NGDOs consider which specific capabilities networks working on PILA need to be successful (see also section 8.3.1). For example, leadership needs to be shared and members should aim to satisfy the interests of all members. Furthermore, sufficient transparency is necessary and knowledge and data have to be shared. Other capacity requirements for effective PILA coalitions are that CSOs

deal with diversity and power asymmetries within the networks and that they continuously reflect on the added value of the network.

Donors also face dilemmas. It is difficult for them to reach out to organizations beyond their established network of NGDOs, which are often based in the North or in capital cities in the South. Furthermore, their policies, financial support and attached administrative demands invoke 'upward accountability', at the expense of 'downward accountability' from the CSOs to their constituencies. However, even though issues of inadequate legitimacy and lack of support are valid, donors should not stop financing NGDOs altogether, as they may be among the few implementing organizations in place. After all, given the increasingly restrictive environments for civil society, it may be unrealistic to expect local organizations to evolve independently.

2.6 Lesson 5: donors and Northern NGDOs should give precedence to Southern CSOs' ownership

Developing capacity for PILA is an evolutionary process that is founded on a particular CSO's work and experiences. Agility is an essential element of PILA capacity. It means being ready and determined when the opportunity arises. Capacity development is hindered when CSOs do not consider it critical for their effectiveness, or when donor practices restrict CSO ownership of the PILA agenda and of the Theory of Change (ToC).

For CSOs, an essential part of capacity development is that they focus on longer-term campaigns. This implies that they move away from ad hoc activities, which are often initiated by donors. In doing so, a ToC explaining how PILA objectives are expected to be reached, and a longer-term strategy are indispensable. With taking on the final responsibility for achieving results comes the responsibility for accountability. CSOs should therefore ensure that they are able to justify their actions.

Donors have several options to recognize Southern CSOs ownership, for example by redesigning accountability and reporting requirements attached to their funding. Donors aiming to support PILA capacity development should allow for more operating space and autonomy of Southern CSOs than is usually the case in project or program funding. This implies that Southern CSOs should initiate program design instead of Northern NGDOs, as is often the case. The Dutch strategic partnerships are no exception, as Dutch NDGOs often take the lead in program design.

Northern NGDOs may wish to explore new forms of partnerships with Southern CSOs that are more symmetrical. Open, interactive discussion may help to develop more symmetrical relationships among the partners in the aid chain. But this gets complicated as Northern NGDOs play dual roles: they conduct PILA in collaboration with Southern CSOs and provide support to Southern CSO to conduct their own PILA. In practice, both overlap, which sometimes confuses matters and may jeopardize Southern ownership. It becomes even

more complicated when Northern NGDOs have offices in developing countries that conduct PILA within the country, as the boundaries between the local and the global become blurred and competition for resources may arise.

2.7 Lesson 6: Southern CSOs need sound monitoring and evaluation for learning

Tacit knowledge, the informal knowledge about how and why things work, is an essential part of an organization's capacity and its ability to stay relevant under changing circumstances. Learning-by-doing, supported by regular reflection based on a ToC, helps to systematize this knowledge and make it available for broader application. However, there is abundant literature stating that many CSOs are preoccupied with satisfying donors' reporting requirements to avoid risking their funding. They hardly utilize their own M&E system for organizational learning.

If donors are serious about capacity development and are ready to put learning-by-doing center stage, they may wish to adjust their reporting requirements accordingly. This also means focusing more on outputs, outcomes and impact, rather than on controlling inputs.

Capacity development also requires that CSOs take their own M&E system more seriously and consider accountability, both downward to their constituency and upward to their donor, as a critical element of their own good governance.

What are the conclusions and lessons from the evaluation?

3

What is the Ministry's PILA policy and what are the challenges?

Summary

Dutch development cooperation has always emphasized the role of civil society in developing countries. The Dutch government considers the emancipation of impoverished people and the strengthening of democracy and human rights in developing countries to be very important.

Over the past decades, PILA support to CSOs was provided in a less coherent manner. The minister's recent policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent' indicates a more structured and focused approach.

The Dutch PILA policy follows a general trend among donors and international development organizations of increasingly turning to policy influencing and advocacy work as a means of realizing sustainable development. They recognize that politics and accountability are vital to improving services and that it is the role of civil society to demand these services and accountability. But this does not mean that they support PILA on a large scale.

The new Dutch PILA policy is founded on intentions and assumptions that reflect a political commitment to the role of civil society and the potential it has to steer development, but it is hardly based on sound evidence. This poses risks, because the literature raises serious questions about civil society's agency and the role of CSOs. Issues of concern are that: (1) civil society is not always a positive force in society; (2) the boundaries between state, market and civil society have blurred and the conventional concept of civil society as a sector is challenged; (3) the Western concept of civil society does not apply well to non-Western societies; (4) the use of social media and the rise of informal ways of organizing protest sidelines traditional CSOs; and (5) the legitimacy of CSOs, in particular the legitimacy of NGDOs (CSOs financed by donors), is questionable.

Dilemmas in the Dutch Ministry's policy priorities, stemming from the duality of goals in the policy framework, pose a risk. On the one hand, strengthening PILA capacity of local CSOs is seen as an intrinsic value, while on the other hand it is viewed as an instrument to contribute to specific thematic development goals. The perspective determines where the mandate lies, with the embassies abroad or with thematic policy departments at home. Furthermore, the aid and trade agenda inhibits interests that are not always easy to align.

Moreover, knowledge and experience regarding PILA varies within the Ministry. Substantial knowledge was built up recently in the Department for Social Development (DSO) with the preparations of the policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent', but this is less the case for the thematic departments and the Dutch embassies that are expected to play a prominent role in the near future.

Reader's guide
Section 3.1 compares past and present PILA policies of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Section 3.2 shows that Dutch policy reflects international trends in supporting CSOs.

Section 3.3 points out that there is no evidence for effectiveness in practice of supporting PILA so far. Furthermore, development literature challenges the agency of CSOs. This poses a risk, as CSOs are central actors in the Ministry's and many other donors' PILA support policies.

Section 3.4 discusses how conflicting policy priorities and knowledge gaps between different departments within the Ministry pose a challenge to policy implementation.

3.1 Dutch PILA policy intentions have evolved from fragmented towards more cohesive

In the past, and for the most part of the evaluation period, the Ministry did not have a specific PILA policy. Policy intentions relating to PILA focused on civil society support in general and expenditure was rather haphazard and scattered, with many separate programs and projects, on many different themes, under various policy departments.

The new policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent' and the strategic partnerships with (mostly Dutch) CSOs ensure a more cohesive and strategic approach to PILA. PILA is seen as an intrinsic value, with PILA capacity contributing to the watchdog role of civil society in democratic societies, as well as an instrument to achieve thematic development goals. The balance between both perspectives may differ for each of the strategic partnerships. With the policy framework comes a dedicated budget for PILA capacity development. It is difficult to compare the amount of funds available for PILA, as expenditures on PILA in the period 2008-2014 are difficult to calculate. Rough estimates, however, indicate that the annual PILA budget for the period 2015-2020 will be higher.

In the new policy framework, PILA was brought in line with the broader 'aid and trade' agenda. It is seen as a strategy to ensure that businesses comply with CSR demands, which are set to reach development goals.

3.1.1 Dutch PILA policies in the past had no dedicated policy or budget

During the evaluation period 2008-2014, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not have a comprehensive policy document on PILA and the role of civil society in it, until the minister announced the new policy intentions in 2013. In the earlier period, references to the importance the Ministry attaches to PILA can be found in general policy frameworks regarding development cooperation, and in specific thematic policy papers.

An early example of the Ministry's policy intentions regarding civil society was expressed in the policy memorandum *Civil Society and Structural Poverty Reduction: Actors in Dutch Civil Society*.

In this memorandum, the minister for Development Cooperation stressed that: 'Promoting the rights of the poor, creating opportunities and obtaining access happens through (self) organization, the joining of forces for social mobilization and through organizing countervailing power' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001). According to the memorandum, CSOs may well cooperate and engage in constructive dialogue with their government and with donors. The minister added that: '… to play its part in structural poverty reduction, civil society must be allowed the space to develop. The government must create – or at least actively permit – an "enabling environment" as part of its good governance.' Freedom of assembly and association and freedom of expression are often regarded as the principal, if not sole, conditions. Equally important, however, is the availability of and access to sufficient and independent resources, unrestricted and affordable communication channels, unrestricted information, space for negotiation and independent bodies to settle disputes.

The memorandum providing a policy framework for MFS II for the period 2010-2015, specified policy influencing as a separate strategy that can be pursued to achieve structural poverty reduction (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a). According to this memorandum, CSOs use their experience with poverty reduction programs to give citizens a voice and call governments and businesses to account. They do so to influence or change processes and structures that maintain or even exacerbate poverty and inequality. The framework states that it is essential that CSOs not just speak for themselves, but for the public at large, from rural as well as urban areas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009a). CSOs are believed to be firmly based in grassroots, working from the bottom up, and thus crucial for building a stable society.[4]

The memorandum further states that the role of CSOs is not confined to the national level. CSOs can also influence the international agenda and the outcomes of international negotiations. In a globalizing world, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between domestic and international affairs. The major issues of our time – such as the economic crisis, food insecurity, trade policy, environmental degradation and shortage of energy – can only be tackled effectively through international action.

Two years later, in 2011, the minister for European Affairs and International Cooperation wrote a letter to parliament presenting the focus of Development Cooperation policy. It described 'advocacy and policy influencing, nationally and internationally' as the first priority in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011a).

Budget 2008-2014[5]
In order to achieve an overview of the Ministry's expenditures on PILA in the period 2008-2014, IOB had to combine various sources of information. Among them were different policy departments and several recent IOB evaluations that interface with PILA (such as direct funding, 2014, and human rights, 2015). Approximately 55 projects and programs in different thematic fields were classified as PILA or containing a substantial PILA element.

4 The relation between CSOs and civil society is discussed extensively in section 3.3.
5 More elaborate information on how IOB came to its findings regarding the budget for PILA in the evaluation period, can be found in Annex 4.

This was based on a review of the objectives, the proposed activities and the envisaged results in the internal appraisal documents. Analysis indicates that many of these 55 activities do not have a clear objective on policy influencing, but focus on building capacity, on raising awareness and on research and publications.

The total value of the activities with a substantial PILA component in the period 2008-2014 is estimated at around EUR 325 million. In general, the contract value of the 55 activities ranges between EUR 100,000 and EUR 50 million. For approximately 70 percent of the activities the contract value is more than EUR 1 million. In several of the activities, PILA constitutes a subcomponent of the project, besides interventions such as services and technical assistance. For the majority of the activities, however, PILA is the main area of intervention, with 100 percent of the budget allocated to policy influencing or supporting functions such as knowledge development, freedom of expression or civic engagement.

3.1.2 Present PILA policy 'Dialogue and Dissent' is more structured and focused

In 2013, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation clearly expressed her policy intentions regarding PILA in a letter to parliament entitled *Cooperation with civil society in a new context* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). The memorandum states that it is of utmost importance that CSOs take part in policy processes at the local, national and international level. CSOs represent the voice of the people and this needs to be heard in order to ensure inclusive and effective policies, and a more accountable and legitimate government altogether.[6]

The minister explicitly chooses to strengthen the advocating and influencing role of civil society, because internationally this role receives less support than for example services or technical assistance. Furthermore, governments may accept CSOs as service providers, but they do not recognize their role when it comes to advocacy or dissent, which is exactly the role that is necessary for inclusive and sustainable development. The new policy framework cannot be seen separate from the budget cuts on the Dutch development aid, which forced the minister to make clearer choices.

The minister's policy intentions were further elaborated in the policy framework for civil society organizations *'Dialogue and Dissent': Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy* for the period 2016-2020 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). In this framework, the minister states that an important motivation for supporting PILA is the fact that the substantial economic growth realized in low- and middle-income countries has not resulted in growth for everyone. In many cases, the gap between rich and poor has even widened. In the minister's view, reducing inequality should be high on the post-2015 international development agenda. However, not only economic inequality needs to be addressed, but also social, political, religious and ethnic inequality as well as inequality based on gender or sexual orientation. The minister considers civil society an important actor to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. CSOs provide checks and balances in society, and function as watchdogs to hold governments and businesses to account (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

[6] The minister emphasizes that CSOs themselves should also demonstrate maximum transparency and accountability in their operations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013b).

The overall goal of this policy framework is to:

> *'Strengthen CSOs in low- and lower-middle-income countries in their role as advocates and lobbyists. This will enable them to fulfill that role, and – working with their national and international partners, and through their local, national and international networks – to contribute to sustainable, inclusive development for all and fight against poverty and injustice.' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014)*

The objective strongly focuses on capacity development for PILA, but not exclusively. There is a common understanding among the Ministry and its partners that results are to be reported on capacity development as well as thematic PILA results.[7]

The overall goal refers to PILA as an intrinsic value as well as an instrument to achieve development goals. As an intrinsic value, the capacity of civil society to influence policy is considered an essential part of 'the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully' (OECD, 2006), in other words, to choose and follow their own development paths (IOB, 2011). From this perspective, PILA capacity is not just a means to realize immediate results in health or environment, but it refers to effective systems, institutions, organizations and individuals that are crucial to a country's capability to pursue its development path. This perspective requires that checks and balances are in place to protect the public interest, that laws are upheld, justice is done and public goods and services are provided. But it also requires that the poor, particularly women and their civil organizations, are able to defend their position and rights by influencing political processes and participating in decision-making, and that they have access to basic services and opportunities to earn a fair income.

The instrumental approach to PILA refers to its use to achieve specific results in certain development sectors, for example policy changes on water and sanitation or health, often in a short period of time.

Though both perspectives could be combined, there are risks involved when capacity development, which is a long-term process, is compromised by donor pressure to achieve policy changes in the short term. Furthermore, a technical approach to PILA as a means of achieving thematic development goals might serve as a way to get a seat at the table, but there is a risk of neglecting underlying power structures.

The balance between both perspectives of the need for and use of PILA may differ for each situation. Therefore, the question should always be: PILA for whom, or as a function of what?

Budget 2016-2020

The Ministry will make EUR 219 million available annually over a 5-year period for the policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent', which is dedicated to capacity development for PILA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). Approximately EUR 185 million of the funding is available for strategic partnerships with Dutch NGDOs. Of the remainder, it is envisaged that EUR 15 million will annually go to an Accountability Fund to be disbursed by the embassies. Another EUR 10 million will go to another facility named Voice, while EUR 9 million is still unspecified (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c).

[7] Kick-off conference (12 March 2015).

Although expenditures on PILA in the period 2008-2014 are difficult to calculate, rough estimates indicate that the annual PILA budget for the period 2015-2020 will be higher, even if the percentage of MFS II budget spent on PILA in the period 2008-2014 had been 40 percent of the total. See Annex 4 for an explanation of how IOB arrived at this estimate.

Alignment of PILA with the broader 'aid and trade' agenda
How the minister combines the 'aid and trade' agenda with the new policy on civil society support for PILA is particularly visible in a greater involvement of the Ministry in PILA when it comes to the private sector and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (see also section 4.5). According to the Ministry (2013a), 'international corporate social responsibility is a condition for sustainable and inclusive growth'. The minister refers to CSR as instrumental for reaching her development goals and to PILA as a strategy to make sure that companies comply; either by directly influencing corporate agenda's or by supporting Dutch CSOs to fulfill this influencing role. Civil society's role in CSR is seen as similar to its role towards government, that of a watchdog monitoring business policy and practice (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013b), The Ministry foresees several avenues for engagement of the private sector by CSOs regarding CSR-related issues, tapping into various roles of advisor, watchdog or advocate.

According to the Ministry (2013b), the government's task is mainly to provide information, facilitate dialogue and monitor compliance of multinational companies with the OECD Guidelines (OECD, 2011). However, this focus has caused civil society to criticize the government for not taking its full responsibility, as it denies its own policymaking agency and the responsibility to ensure policy coherence.[8] Furthermore, with the implementation of the Ministry's PILA policy, tensions may well arise between developing PILA capacity of local CSOs and pursuing other priorities of Dutch foreign policy, including trade and commercial interests.

3.2 Dutch policy reflects international trends to support CSOs

Dutch PILA policy is consistent with international trends of providing donor support for political work, including policy dialogue and domestic accountability. This international trend includes the support of civil society and its organizations in bringing the voice of the poor and other marginalized and vulnerable groups into the policymaking process. Dutch policy is rather unique for its dedicated policy framework, which pays attention to sensitive issues such as human rights, with a dedicated budget.

Donors recognize the political dimension of aid, but are hesitant to act upon it
Since the publication of the World Development Report 2004, more donors have shifted from merely funding projects to actively engaging in policy work, often involving domestic

8 Reference made during a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2014 with representatives from the Ministry, Dutch civil society and the private sector.

accountability and policy dialogue.[9] They do this 'to pursue opportunities in developing countries to bring about changes in policy' and 'to achieve specific social, economic and political reforms', often as part of their support to the development and implementation of national or sectoral development plans (CIDA, 2002). Alignment to international trends in itself has little value, as donors may herd around certain 'fashionable' issues or countries, contrary to evidence-based insights. However, there seems to be a general trend towards acknowledging the political dimension of aid and development. Donor support to CSOs in policy dialogue aims to bring the voice of the poor and other marginalized and vulnerable groups into the (development) policymaking process (ITAD & COWI, 2012). From this perspective, CSOs are seen as grounded in civil society and connected to people that are generally excluded from policy dialogue.[10] And donors recognize the important role of civil society in attaining inclusive development. 'The proposition that a strong, independent civil society contributes to good governance and pro-poor development outcomes is a common feature of most [donor] policies' (INTRAC, 2013).

However, even though there may be a trend in donor policy intentions and in rhetoric regarding the importance of supporting civil society and PILA processes, this common understanding does not mean that supporting PILA is practiced systematically on a large scale. Often, donor policies are still based on their own priorities and perceptions. Donors hesitate to engage in this, often sensitive, work and they are wary of the political nature of PILA (Carothers & De Gramont, 2013). Moreover, donor policies tend to pursue multiple, sometimes even conflicting, goals and interests with limited instruments. If a trade-off arises, donors need to make conscious choices about which interest prevails.

3.3 Present PILA policy is not evidence-based and CSOs' agency is challenged

The Dutch policy framework *'Dialogue and Dissent': Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy* was founded on intentions and underlying assumptions. It reflects a moral political commitment to the role civil society can and should play in democratic societies and its potential to steer development in a direction that is considered desirable from the perspective of inclusiveness, justice and sustainability.

The policy framework is hardly based on sound evidence on the democratic role of civil society and the position of PILA to achieve this. This poses risks, because civil society's agency is challenged. There are a number of issues of concern, which will be further discussed below.

9 However, policy dialogue is sometimes defined in rather limited terms, focusing mainly on bilateral interaction between governments and issues like aid effectiveness, budget support and technical assistance. A distinction in focus is sometimes made between policy and political dialogue. See for example Molenaers (2012).

10 'This premise raises several important concerns; the representativeness of the CSO and the extent to which demands are really from the grass roots' (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

1) Civil society is not always a positive force in society.
2) The boundaries between state, market and civil society have blurred and the conventional concept of civil society as a sector is challenged.
3) The Western concept of civil society does not apply well to non-Western societies.
4) The use of social media and the rise of informal ways of organizing protest sidelines traditional CSOs.
5) The legitimacy of CSOs, in particular that of NGDOs – CSOs financed by donors – is questionable.

Firstly, there is substantial criticism on the portrayal of civil society as 'inherently good for democracy and development' (Kamstra, 2014). Although civil society inherently offers a counterweight to social interaction in other spheres, such as the state and market, the outcomes are partly determined by existing power relations and conflicting interests (Fowler, 2000). Biekart and Fowler (2012) argue that civil society is often seen as always seeking justice, fairness and some understanding of a collective good, but the so-called 'uncivil' part – oligarchic elites, corporate and drug cartels and so on – that also drives and acts as protagonist of socio-political processes, is often ignored. Yet its existence and influence, including the curtailment of civil liberties, are patently clear. According to Ottaway & Carothers (cited in Kamstra, 2014), 'in the eyes of many donors and recipients, and even of many democratic theorists, the idea that civil society is always a positive force for democracy, indeed even the most important one, is unassailable'.

Secondly, authors observe changes in how civil society is organized and how it functions when they explain recent examples of civic activism in Latin America, Europe and Northern Africa. CIVICUS' State of Civil Society report 2011 reports that in 2011, the moments of protest, dissent and activism in its various forms raise fundamental questions about what civil society is and how those with an interest in civil society understand it and try to work with it. Biekart and Fowler (2012) take the position that the boundaries between state, market and (civil) society have blurred. The authors challenge the conventional concept of civil society, because it does not respond adequately to the diversity of societies and its political drivers, for example in emerging powers such as Brazil and China. Furthermore, the evolution of CSOs and their associated expectations has not succeeded in revealing the forces at play in society. Instead, it masks complexity with contending parties in a society's struggles.

Thirdly, authors argue that the concept of civil society does not necessarily travel well to non-Western settings. Standards of voluntarism, individualism and solidarity that are characteristic of Western associational life may be weak or limited to urban sophisticates (IOB, 2011). Because of this incongruence, some observers question the relevance of the concept in much of Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere (IOB, 2011).

Fourthly, various sources mention the increased use of social media, resulting in the sidelining of CSOs. Advances in global communication have demonstrated the power of spontaneous mass demonstrations (e.g. convened through mobile phones or social network sites). The immediacy of response confirms the efficacy of these approaches (ITAD & COWI, 2012). According to CIVICUS (2011), these structural changes in present-day activism

pose new challenges to CSOs. The main question CIVICUS asks is how CSOs can offer enduring pathways for continued activism and participation in settings characterized by informality and networks that are diffuse and transcend their traditional scope. In the protests during the Arab Spring, the traditional CSOs hardly played a role and were barely aware of the network dynamics at play (CIVICUS, 2011). The *Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue* also points to the changing nature of CS engagement from formal groups to spontaneous action, observing that people increasingly want to engage 'on their own terms' (ITAD & COWI, 2012). If CSOs want to remain relevant, their understanding of civil society needs to encompass non-formal movements and online activism besides traditional forms of participation (CIVICUS, 2011).

Fifthly, many sources point to the problematic legitimacy of CSOs. Brian Pratt (2009), former director of INTRAC, states that 'many CSOs have drifted away from civil society'. CSOs may derive their legitimacy from being expert organizations, promoting new issues such as LGBT, or from being the legitimate representative of their grassroots. However, for CSOs that claim to represent sections of the population it is often not very clear whom they represent. Agg (2006) identified a problem of legitimacy and democratic accountability, as these CSOs are often not accountable to any constituency other than their funding sources (see also Kamstra, 2014). Kamstra (2014) argues that donor funding creates the paradoxical situation where the aid relation itself weakens the democratic capacities of the CSO it tries to strengthen. It has the unintended effect of weakening the link between CSO and civil society as it replaces accountability to constituencies with accountability to donors (Kamstra, 2014).

According to CIVICUS (2011), the resulting impression is one of disconnects: disconnects between CSOs and other sectors of society, between CSOs of different types, such as faith groups and trade unions, between service providing CSOs and advocacy CSOs, and between CSOs and citizens. The majority of people have no association with civil society in its institutionalized form, but may associate in less organized forms and more organic structures (CIVICUS, 2011).

3.4 Conflicting policy priorities and knowledge gaps within the Ministry pose a challenge

The dilemmas regarding the duality in goals of the policy framework pose a risk for successful implementation. Building PILA capacity of local CSOs, regardless of the themes they are working on, is a goal in itself, while PILA is also viewed as a way to contribute to specific thematic or sectorial development goals. Furthermore, there is a potential tension in the aid and trade agenda between different priorities of foreign policy and interests involved, building PILA capacity being only one of them.

Besides policy priority dilemmas there are knowledge gaps between different departments involved in the implementation of the PILA policy framework. The knowledge and experience with PILA varies considerably within the Ministry, which poses a risk.

Within the Ministry, the Department for Social Development (DSO) is primarily responsible for PILA and the management of the strategic partnerships. This department has come a long way regarding knowledge and understanding of PILA processes during the preparation of the policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent' and its early phase. This included the selection of the strategic partners and the formulation of the strategic program documents. However, IOB found that the thematic departments within the Ministry are relatively new to PILA and do not yet fully grasp the practice of PILA and what this means for program implementation and management. Tensions may also arise because the policy framework allows for emphasizing either the intrinsic value of PILA, a view held by the Department for Social Development (DSO), or the instrumental value, which is more often stressed by the thematic departments. Furthermore, efforts to support PILA through campaigns and capacity development may cause conflicts of interests, for instance with trade relations.

The Dutch embassies have different roles and responsibilities within the strategic partnership framework. On the one hand, they have to cooperate with the Dutch organizations and/or their partners in implementing the programs in the countries where they are located. They perform crucial tasks in supporting PILA activities and interventions, for example by providing political backing, facilitating dialogue or lending access to their networks. On the other hand, they can support CSOs directly. Through direct funding they do not only provide similar non-financial support, as described above, but they are also responsible for the project management of the financial support. Moreover, Dutch representations may become policy influencers themselves when they lobby or advocate for an enabling environment for CSOs or against restrictions of that operating space. Embassies are the natural actors to take up these roles, as they have a presence on the ground, expertise of the local political and socio-economic situation and strong networks that include civil society representatives. But one also needs to recognize that for the embassies the reputation of the Netherlands in promoting human rights through PILA varies (IOB, 2015b). Reasons for diverging degrees of involvement include considerations regarding Dutch economic or security interests, historical ties, and capacity available at embassies.

In order to be effective, it is crucial that the embassies responsible for the direct funding of PILA have the necessary capacity to perform all these roles championed by and demanded from them. The minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation acknowledged this capacity requirement in her letter to parliament entitled *Cooperation with civil society in a new context* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). However, so far little specific guidance is provided in terms of implementation.[11]

11 The policy framework '*Dialogue and Dissent: Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy*' does not say anything about the Accountability Fund, only that 'From 2016 the Ministry will also step up direct funding of Southern organizations by the embassies, through the Accountability Fund' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

4

Thematic study I: How effective was PILA support in the field of CSR?

Summary

PILA campaigns by CSOs have contributed to raising labor issues higher on the agenda of companies in The Netherlands and abroad. They have also contributed to the development of specific Coroporate Social Responsibilitiy (CSR) policies in companies. Furthermore, many PILA activities were followed up by opportunities for CSOs to influence further thinking inside companies and across industries. In some cases, regular CSO-company interactions affect the way companies deal with labor standards in supply chains. CSOs' campaigns also contributed to active positions of the Dutch government towards the promotion of labor standards by Dutch companies.

In each of the three case studies of the CSR study, the Dutch commercial interest and/or market share was too small to have the leverage required for making an impact on the ground in supplying developing countries and for improving the labor conditions. Therefore, an essential next step to create the necessary 'weight' for this kind of leverage is the establishment of international initiatives and coalitions such as The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (2013) in the clothing industry, the Better Coal initiative (2012) in the energy (coal) sector, and the Electronics Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC) and the IDH Electronics program in the IT industry. These networks should aim to bring local networks into contact with companies in order to control the implementation of commitments and compliance with existing agreements and standards. However, workers will have to be organized eventually, as it is very difficult to ensure that claims resonate with companies in the absence of (strong) civil society actors, such as trade unions.

The Dutch government has become more involved in the interactions between CSOs and companies and government positions generally promote the effectiveness of PILA activities by CSOs directed at companies. The CSOs sometimes experience the agenda-setting role of the government as unclear and inconsistent in policy and practice.

Reader's guide
This chapter draws on the study '*The effectiveness of Policy Influencing Lobby and Advocacy on Corporate Social Responsibility: Three case studies of PILA activities promoting global labor standards*', which was commissioned by IOB as part of this evaluation (Fransen & De Winter, 2015; see Annex 7). IOB refers to this document for the references.

Section 4.1 gives an introductory overview of the trends in the globalized labor market and an explanation for the selection of the cases.

Sections 4.2-4.4 present summaries of the three case studies: the textile Industry in Bangladesh and PILA efforts by the International Secretariat of the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC IS), the IT electronics industry in China and influencing activities by SOMO and the coal mining sector in Colombia, where FNV Mondiaal has been active.

Section 4.5 describes the Dutch government's stance on labor conditions and its involvement in CSR.

4.1 Trends in the globalized labor market highlight the need for PILA on CSR

Over the last thirty years, the organization of production of mass consumer goods has dispersed all over the globe. Production chains were formed that connect companies, running from Northern America and Europe into Central and South America, Eastern Europe, and South and Southeast Asia. Labor-intensive manufacturing takes place in countries characterized by an abundant non-skilled labor supply and relatively low wage levels.

Brands and retailers rely on a large pool of suppliers who regularly receive large orders with tight deadlines. The supplying textile manufacturers often use subcontractors for certain segments of the production chain. Studies emphasize the occurrence of excessive overtime, abuse, and suppression of labor representation. In India, labor abuse has been identified in the clothing chain in small informal workplaces, often involving sewing work by whole families, including children. In China, factories supplying global brands have been known to apply harsh quasi-military management techniques in order to push workers towards higher production levels. Globalized consumer good production thus puts workers in a vulnerable position.

States with governments as different in political character as China, Indonesia, and Mexico nowadays have legal frameworks that ostensibly protect workers' rights in the formal sectors of the economy. But low standard working conditions persist in industries (and elsewhere) because of a lack of enforcement of these legal frameworks. Absence of strong workers organizations and trade unions partly explain the persistence of this situation.

Public attention in developed countries has at times focused on the working conditions and limited worker rights in export production regions of developing countries.

Within these contexts, the researchers selected three cases relating to an influential organization that was involved in PILA strategies relevant to the key event. Each organization was co-financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The researchers selected three contexts that offer thematic uniformity, but vary in the issues and sectors at hand (Table 1).

Table 1 Overview of the three selected CSR cases

Issue	Sector	Region/Country	Organization
Factory safety	Textile	Bangladesh	CCC International Secretariat
Wages and overtime	IT-electronics	China	SOMO
Right to organize	Coal mining	Colombia	FNV Mondiaal

4.2 Textile industry in Bangladesh: a big surge in policy influence regarding factory safety

The case study on PILA activities regarding working conditions in the clothing industry in Bangladesh finds that the International Secretariat of the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC IS) succeeded in changing companies' agendas and CSR policies. By taking an evidence-based approach and building international networks, they managed to push the issue of factory safety and translate PILA demands into an international multi-stakeholder initiative.

4.2.1 Context: garment factory owners have great political influence

Up until 2013, Bangladesh was the world's second-leading clothing exporter, after China. At that point, Bangladesh had the lowest clothing wages in the world. Clothing made up 80 percent of manufacturing exports and provided more than three million jobs. Clothing production is perceived to contribute significantly to development, for example by offering women a route for social advancement.

The clothing industry in Bangladesh is closely linked to the ruling political elite. Factory owners are political donors and have moved into news media, buying newspapers and television stations. In parliament, roughly two-thirds of the members belong to the country's three biggest business associations. Reports state that 30 factory owners or their family members hold seats in parliament, about 10 percent of the total. Corruption is also a prevalent problem. Bangladesh ranks among the most corrupt countries in the world in measures by Transparency International, with business corruption cited among the most prevalent categories.

More than in other manufacturing regions in Asia, factory-building structures in Bangladesh are known to deteriorate within years or contain serious construction flaws. While a government inspectorate on factory safety exists, it is known to have been severely understaffed in the years leading up to the Rana Plaza crisis. A string of crises in South Asia in the past years have pushed factory safety higher on the agenda of labor policy as an urgent political issue. The most recent ones include the Tazreen factory fire in Dhaka and the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory.

PILA demands for factory safety should be easier to succeed in comparison to a far more politicized issue such as Freedom of Association, pertaining to the balance of power at the workplace. Moreover, one might hypothesize that it should be easier for CSOs to work together with governments and companies on factory safety because of a shared interest.

4.2.2 Strategy: developing evidence and building international networks

Over the past ten years, CCC IS's strategy has been to provide evidence-based information detailing casualties, circumstances in production zones, and linkages to Western buyers. Western companies were informed informally, as well as the national and global media. In addition, the companies were informally approached through lobbies with demands to change CSR policies and contribute to compensation for victims and their families in ways the Bangladeshi unions and the international CSO networks deemed appropriate. If these companies were non-responsive, activist campaigns were organized by the national legs of the CCC IS, relating companies in campaigning material to the casualties. An example here is the targeting of Scapino after the collapse of the Spectrum factory in 2005.

From the Spectrum crisis onwards, the CCC IS worked together with the Bangladeshi unions and the international trade union organization IndustriALL, and later with other organizations to develop a schedule of requirements for systemic change in Bangladeshi factory safety. Governments, Bangladeshi industry and Western brands would have to change policies and practices according to these requirements. The requirements were subsequently used in informal and public requirements. These requirements, in turn, went through different stages of institutional evolution, leading to a concrete proposal for a Memorandum of Understanding (the *Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh*). This was to be signed by companies, which would form the basis for a national-level initiative to improve factory safety in the clothing industry of Bangladesh.

All PILA activities combined influencing behind closed doors with public campaigning, and mostly value-based PILA with some evidence-based influence strategies. Targets are mostly European companies with influence on Bangladeshi suppliers.

4.2.3 Effectiveness; The Rana Plaza tragedy made the difference

The International Secretariat of the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC IS) and its partners effectively translated their PILA demands into an agreement called the Accord. CCC IS also succeeded in getting companies to sign up to the Accord, creating critical mass for implementation of the Accord. Notably, this time it was not hampered by a difference of opinion between discount retailers and more high-end brands. On other labor standard issues in the past, these groups diverged in their response to PILA.

The negotiations and PILA activities prior to the Tazreen fire and the Rana Plaza collapse laid the groundwork for making the requirements clear to the companies, and the increased urgency after both incidents induced the companies to meet the CCC IS requirements. Some of the influence was indirect, as the different European legs of the CCC IS and its partners approached companies who would in turn spread the word to other companies who then responded in their policies towards the Accord.

The CCC IS and the Dutch CCC chapter were also effective after the Tazreen fire in reaching out to civil servants of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and working with the minister to put the factory safety issue higher on the corporate agendas. In this, the CCC IS and the Dutch CCC chapter benefited from the minister's wish to make the issue a theme to boost her political profile, and from a heightened sense of urgency among civil servants within the Ministry about factory safety in Bangladesh. The Accord and the work of CCC IS and the Dutch CCC chapter on it provided an effective policy outlet for this.

Finally, the CCC IS made effective use of contacts with Dutch MPs in parliament, who put the factory safety issue on the agenda, urging the minister to address industry players. The tragedies of Tazreen and Rana Plaza ironically helped put the CCC IS's own priorities more center stage on the political agenda.

Generally, within one year the CCC IS therefore translated about eight years of previous work on factory safety-focused PILA into an observably successful policy outcome, using the sense of urgency after Tazreen and Rana Plaza. If one were to judge CCC IS's and their partners' PILA activities by what they brought about until 2012, the results would have appeared bleak: few companies signing on to an agreement that had taken years to develop and many targeted companies resisting PILA demands. Optimistically however, one might say that in 2013, the CCC IS and its partners were ready to reap what they had sown now that opportunity knocked. Generally, during the time period of the factory safety PILA activities studied (2005-2013), the CCC IS also managed to boost its image with its main targets in the Netherlands, Dutch companies. While the company representatives do not doubt that the CCC IS basically aims for similar things as ten years ago, the willingness of companies has grown to work with the CCC IS on resolving issues raised through PILA. This is largely due to what companies perceive as a change in the way that the CCC IS reaches out to them.

4.3 IT electronics industry in China: starting conversations on working hours & overtime

SOMO is working on the IT electronics sector in China as the high output demand and the pressure to meet tight deadlines lead to excessive overtime within the global production chain. SOMO's strategy is evidence-based advocacy. They conduct research to inform companies on malpractices along their value chains and engage them to change corporate conduct. Direct cooperation with Dutch companies combined with public campaigning and international networking has paid off, as labor standards are higher on the CSR agenda in the sector.

4.3.1 Context: globalization in optima forma

The global electronics industry is one of the largest industrial sectors in the global economy. It is characterized by its use of outsourcing and subcontracting. The geographical dispersion of the supply chain has led the industry to be structured through complex production chains, in which companies cooperate with contract manufacturers and component

suppliers across the globe. Currently, over 15 million employees work in the electronics sector, with China as a major production hub. The industry is highly competitive, innovative and fast changing with short product cycles, and it employs a just-in-time production model. In order to stay competitive, manufacturers must master this fast pace of change, where excess inventory or transit time and delays of expensive components anywhere in the value chain result in value loss. Such high-pressured industry characteristics determine the type of players that can participate in these competitive production chains, and the conditions under which they do so.

Today, China dominates the global market as the top exporter of electronic goods, its market share reaching 20 percent, with the country undertaking 80 percent of basic component production and a large portion of final assembly in the electronics industry. In most countries where electronics manufacturing is outsourced, labor and environmental standard enforcement is weak. The cost and price squeeze, particularly on suppliers, affects the ability to undertake governance over health and safety conditions. High output demand and high pressure to meet tight deadlines, result in suppliers having reported cases of excessive overtime during peak production periods. Many working hours violations are intended by management to recover lost production time or to accommodate unplanned orders. Poor production planning by companies and low wage levels are major drivers for excessive overtime in global production chains.

4.3.2 Strategy; an evidence based approach

SOMO's work is based on a multi-pressure point strategy, in which it seeks as many complementary pressure points as possible. This means influencing as many stakeholders as possible, as well as collaborating closely with civil society on different pressure points along the production chain.

SOMO has clearly stated specific goals and related demands it seeks to meet in its ambition to promote sustainable alternatives and offer counterweight to damaging strategies and practices of multinational companies.

In realizing its goals, SOMO takes on an evidence-based approach to advocate for workers' rights in the value chain of the IT Electronics. It undertakes research to inform companies on malpractices along their value chains and engages them to change corporate conduct based on the findings and solutions SOMO addresses. This process both takes place through lobby and dialogue with companies, in which they are asked to reflect on the findings, and through public campaigns to raise consumer awareness when actions of companies are deemed to fall short. Respondents emphasized the essential value of annual round table discussions with industry players, CSO actors and other stakeholders in their PILA work as a means for continuous dialogue and lobby for improvements.

SOMO describes its role in PILA in two ways: (1) direct, as an expert when dealing with informed policy influencing; and (2) indirect, in its work in lobbying and representation of civil society through their networks and joint projects. In implementing its PILA on IT

electronics, SOMO took the initiative in connecting organizations, as no other structures or alliances were in place at the time to actively pursue PILA demands.

As a mechanism of change, SOMO uses different channels to exert pressure on companies to change their corporate policy and conduct regarding overtime and wages. First, increased awareness of labor issues along the value chain spurs normative commitment of multinational brand companies to address the issues at hand, in an effort to avoid naming and shaming. Second, consumers in developed countries, once informed, will urge companies to align with international initiatives and make improvements towards fair wages and working hours. The public opinion is seen as a vehicle to have companies respond to their demands. Third, international alliances are a necessary and powerful countervailing force to achieve changes in the global production chain of multinational companies. Corporations view international claims as more influential and pursue dialogue with international alliances. Fourth, media are interested in stories of global social injustice and its relation to corporate practices, and may therefore be used to bring injustice to light.

4.3.3 Effectiveness: getting a foot in the door

Throughout the evaluation period, the position of SOMO as an influential stakeholder in achieving PILA demands has grown. As a lead organization in the largest European networks working for improvements in the Electronics value chain, it has established key alliances with influential campaigning organizations in Europe, especially Scandinavian countries, as well as in producing countries. It is able to push its agenda through different international channels and has created a larger audience for its publications.

With its own PILA and indirectly through its research work for other CSO's, SOMO has contributed to a situation in which Dutch companies put labor standards higher up their CSR agenda. The companies interact with CSOs and with industry peers on these issues and frequently seek out CSOs for exchanges on how to further develop their CSR. SOMO's focus on Apple has raised attention for overtime in the industry. This facilitated PILA activities at Dutch companies, and helped stimulate business-to-business PILA activities towards SOMO's demands for the industry. SOMO was helped in this matter by PILA activities of other companies, questions in parliament, and the Dutch government's follow-up response.

At the same time, SOMO did not succeed in drawing out more IT-electronics firms from consultation forums and private standard organizations in which CSOs still have little voice. Most industry-wide decisions on overtime monitoring are industry-dominated. In consultation with its European partners, SOMO has made the deliberate decision to distance itself from the industry initiative *Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition* (EICC), in order to be more effective in reaching its PILA demands as an outside activist. SOMO has created and contributed to parallel multi-stakeholder forums in which the CSO perspective on these and other issues are discussed. It is too early to conclude whether this strategy is effective.

4.4 Coal mining in Colombia: unclear approach regarding the right to organize

After the armed conflict in Colombia stabilized in 2005, foreign investors regained interest in the Colombian coal industry. Over the past years, responsible coal mining has become a major topic on the Dutch political agenda. This is partly due to the vested interest of The Netherlands in the sector, as one of Europe's largest hubs in energy trade. Globally, Colombia has been cited as the most dangerous country for trade unionists. FNVM endeavors to ensure responsible coal mining in Colombia and focuses on the Right to Organize, working with local and international trade unions. FNVM is mostly active in the public domain and does not fear confrontation with their PILA targets, being multinational companies.

The case study finds that the combined effort of different PILA activities undertaken by several Dutch CSOs has contributed to change in the corporate practice of energy companies. However, the effectiveness of FNVM's PILA strategies is difficult to establish, as its efforts have not been systematic. Energy companies perceived FNVM's role as ambiguous and their PILA demands as unclear. FNVM claims to have made a deliberate choice to continue its work on strengthening the capacity of its local partner unions in Colombia and limit its involvement in PILA activities in the Netherlands to a supportive role.

4.4.1 Context: dangerous situations for trade unionists

Almost half of the world's electricity needs are currently met by coal. Since the beginning of the 21st century, coal has been the fastest-growing global energy source. Coal-fired power plants generate 41 percent of the world's electricity.

Colombia is one of the largest coal exporting countries in the world, exporting over 90 percent of its coal. The main buyers are the USA and Europe. The political context in which the Colombian coal sector operates, is influenced by five decades of internal conflict between different armed groups. At the heart of this conflict lies the struggle for land and control over natural resources in a context of great inequality within the country. The armed struggle has polarized Colombia and has caused many victims.

The prevalence of Colombian coal on the global market is relatively new as foreign investors only regained interest in the Colombian industry after the armed conflict stabilized in 2005. Numerous new mining concessions allow foreign companies to invest in the mining sector, which is now one of the most important drivers of the national economy. However, the major mining regions, Cesar and La Guajira, are also facing several key social, environmental and labor challenges. The mining industry in Colombia is regularly confronted with reports and articles on irregularities in relation to the mining sector, especially the coal mines.

Globally, Colombia has been cited as the most dangerous country for trade unionists. Because of the key role that unions have played in defending workers' and communities' rights, advocating peace and condemning paramilitary and guerrilla violence in Colombia, trade unions have been a target for the paramilitary groups since the 1980's. Almost every

year, more trade unionists across different sectors are killed in Colombia than in the rest of the world combined. In 2013, a total of 26 trade unionists were killed. Analysis of the economic sectors most affected by anti-union violence in 2013, reveals that the mining and quarry sector were the most violent, accounting for 25.4 percent of the cases.

Over the past years, responsible coal mining has become a major topic on the Dutch political agenda. This is partly due to the vested interest of The Netherlands in the sector, as one of Europe's largest hubs in energy trade. In 2010, it represented approximately 25 percent of all the coal traded in the Atlantic market, amounting to about 40Mt. Together with the port of Antwerp, the combined trading of the ports of Rotterdam and Amsterdam is seen as indicative for the entire European market. However, Dutch power plants only use a fraction of this coal; about 18 percent of all coal entering the Netherlands.

4.4.2 Strategy: the challenge of building strong alliances

The FNVM-ToC for the period 2009-2012 explicitly mentions four PILA strategies by FNVM towards companies. First of all, FNVM exerts pressure on companies to enforce the Right to Organize along the value chain through their CSR policies. Secondly, FNVM supports research of the behavior of multinational companies in the area of labor union rights. Thirdly, it conducts campaigns towards companies and seeks dialogue with companies. Lastly, it develops joint initiatives in coordination and cooperation with companies and private standard organizations. Most emphasis is placed on empowering local partners in order for them to lobby and advocate on their own behalf.

At the country program level, the issues and demands are co-determined by the local partners. Depending on the local needs, FNVM supports or reinforces lobby and advocacy activities taking place at the local level. When necessary, it carries them internationally through their affiliation with multilateral institutions such as the ILO, or with global unions such as IndustriALL, which is relevant to the case of Colombia. FNVM 'continuously balances between the concrete goals and achievements that local partner unions put forward and the broader issues of labor rights, such as violations of the right to organize, on the international agenda'. It is the belief of FNVM that at country program level local partners should take up as much ownership as possible of the PILA process. When issues concern Dutch industry and interests, it will step forward as FNV or FNVM. When the issues addressed are of a global nature, FNVM has decided to work through their global union partners. In the case of Colombia, for example, this means FNVM mostly works through IndustriALL, which has close ties with FNVM's local partner union Sintracarbon.

Some of the specific demands of FNVM, relevant to the context of Colombia and the issue of 'right to organize', are: (1) create uniform sector unions, because this will increase the effectiveness of the organization, especially in an environment that is 'hostile' towards labor unions; (2) incorporate a social component of Dutch trade relations with Colombia in the policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and (3) strive for the design and development of policies and regulations by authorities that protect trade unions' and workers' rights. These demands all coincide with the strategy and demands related to capacity building of local partners that has priority for FNVM.

To conclude, all PILA activities combine activist strategies through the writing of protest letters and public notices with mostly interest-based PILA in relation to FNVM's roots as a trade union, as well as some evidence-based influence strategies. In practice, targets are mostly multinational companies with local offices in program countries that are relevant to Dutch development policy.

4.4.3 Effectiveness: a mixed picture of influence and questions regarding choices

The combined effort of different PILA activities undertaken by several Dutch CSOs has effectively contributed to changes in the corporate practice of energy companies. Firstly, the issue was effectively brought to the agenda of energy companies and the political debate, especially by repeated calls to action by the Dutch organization PAX. Secondly, even though the issue of Right to Organize along the coal value chain is a transnational one, the PILA activities in the Netherlands were effective in lifting the national dialogue to a European and more international platform, possibly with more leverage. Thirdly, for the first time, energy companies[12] reported on the origin of the coal used in Dutch coal plants, though not aggregated (specifying what energy companies source how much coal from which mine). Fourthly, during the Dutch Coal Dialogue[13] (DCD) the basis for the eventual Bettercoal Code was developed, though it was not put into practice in line with CSO PILA demands.

The effectiveness is more difficult to identify from the perspective of FNVM's PILA demands and strategies. While in most CSO activities taking place throughout the evaluation period that have contributed to the above changes FNVM was a participant, its approach was ambiguous. Although it engaged in dialogue with mining companies in Colombia once, and wrote activist protest letters to the involved multinational companies and government, these activities can be described as incidental and one-time events, in contrast to the recurring nature of the PILA campaign of PAX, which clearly reached the PILA targets. However, FNVM deliberately chose to continue strengthening the capacity of its local partner unions in Colombia sector-wide, rather than specific to the mining sector. Their involvement in PILA activities in the Netherlands was therefore limited and supportive. FNVM considered its position as a union representative as deviating from the Dutch CSO stakeholders involved in the DCD, and therefore decided to be less involved in consultative sessions in function of coordinated actions. However, FNVM's decision to act on a more haphazard basis and distance itself from CSO consultations created confusion and a level of distrust among respondents of the target groups.

[12] Note that some of these companies are semi-state companies owned by lower government bodies in the Netherlands

[13] The Dutch Coal Dialogue (DCD) was established to facilitate a dialogue on the transparency of the Dutch coal supply chain and its social, human rights and environmental impact. At the time, it was a pioneering initiative in the global coal market, with no precedent bringing together stakeholders representing the industry along the value chain (energy companies, steel company, mining companies, industry representatives) and civil society (NGOs and trade unions). FNV Mondiaal delegated participation in the meetings to colleagues at FNV. Although there were differences in priorities, FNV collaborated with other civil society participants of the DCD in establishing PILA demands. FNV did not see a leading role for itself in the DCD, but saw relevance in participating as a labor union representative (Fransen & De Winter, 2015: 95-97).

The outbursts of public attention after the publication of *Dark side of Coal* were received clearly by the companies targeted by PILA, and thus effectively supported the raising of awareness of labor violations in the coal value chain. However, it did not directly contribute to any following steps either by FNVM or the target groups, because the energy companies perceived the FNVM's demands as unclear, and personal relationships between the energy companies and FNVM were too loose for informal consultation to take place.

4.5 Active positions from Dutch government contribute to effectiveness

The CSR study has found active Dutch government positions towards the promotion of labor standards by Dutch industries, and sometimes even companies abroad. The Dutch government has become more involved in the interactions between CSOs and companies and government positions generally promote the effectiveness of PILA activities by CSOs directed at companies. CSOs have also invested considerably in using parliamentary and government-bureaucratic politics as a lever for changing company policies. And Dutch ministers, members of parliament and civil servants acknowledge that CSOs may be allies in promoting political agendas.

In the past few years the Dutch government itself became a part of PILA interactions among Dutch companies and CSOs in dialogue groups, functioning as a funder/facilitator, observer or chair, working towards formal or informal agreements on CSR commitments from companies. Government interventions can promote closer access for CSOs to decision-making. They can boost the urgency of the issues CSOs are advocating for and facilitate the institutionalization of PILA interactions among companies and CSOs.

According to stakeholders, the agenda-setting role of the government sometimes remains unclear and inconsistent in policy and practice.[14] They feel that on the one hand this seems unavoidable, as government policy is dependent on the political reality. But on the other hand, involving the government can be unnecessarily complicated, with different ministries responsible for various CSR issues, such as labor conditions in the Colombian coalmines or environmental requirements in the Netherlands in case of the Dutch energy companies, and a lack of alignment among the ministries.

14 Views expressed during stakeholder meeting on the thematic study on 2 March 2015 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

5

Thematic study II: How effective was PILA support on gender issues?

Summary

Most of the MDG3 projects have contributed to putting gender issues on the public and political agenda, which is supported by awareness creation on specific issues among different target groups. This in it turn has contributed to changes in the enabling environment, including for example improvements in legal frameworks and enhanced knowledge of traditional leaders, government and community members.

However, policy change is not enough. There is still a gap between increased knowledge and changing attitudes that eventually lead towards changed behavior. Social and cultural values, standards and practices constrain the possibilities to further gender equality. This needs to be addressed in order to achieve real progress, but changing personal attitudes and social practices is very hard. Therefore, it is necessary to combine a focus on policy change with efforts aimed at achieving changes in society.

Unfortunately, only a limited number of projects have effectively invested in changing social standards and cultural practices that form the root causes of discrimination of women, by entering into real dialogues at community level.

Reader's guide
This chapter draws from the evaluation of PILA activities that were funded through the 'MDG3 Fund: Investing in Equality' of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IOB, 2015a). IOB refers to this document for the references.

Section 5.1 discusses how the MDG3 Fund was successful in setting political agendas with regard to gender equality issues.

Section 5.2 shows how realizing change on the ground by changing social norms and practices is difficult. On issues like gender-based violence, female leadership, women workers' rights and property and inheritance rights for women CSOs have achieved little consolidated change.

5.1 The MDG3 Fund has contributed to putting gender equality on political agendas

The MDG3 Fund was introduced in 2008 against a backdrop of declining funding for women's organizations worldwide and slow progress in realizing the Millennium Development Goal that deals with promoting gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG3). The Fund's specific aim was to bring about improvements in gender equality and to empower women, with the focus on four priority themes: (1) stopping gender-based violence (GBV); (2) increasing women's participation in politics and public administration; (3) promoting employment and equal employment opportunities; and (4) securing property and inheritance rights for women. The fact that 454 organizations applied to the MDG3 Fund while only 10 percent of the applications could be honored, underlines the need for the fund.

Total expenditures of the MDG3 Fund were EUR 77 million. Around 80 percent of the projects claimed to pursue advocacy and lobbying as their main strategy. The main activities included conducting research, organizing conferences, strengthening advocacy-oriented networks and alliances and investing in raising awareness on equal rights and opportunities for women. This involved targeting the general public, specific target groups and government institutions.

Most of the grantees were larger, well-established organizations like women funds, international networks and INGOs, which in turn often sub-granted to smaller local and grassroots organizations. The majority of the grantees developed interventions aimed at fighting gender-based violence (GBV) and enhancing political participation of women. Political participation is most often seen as strengthening female leadership at local level, as a strategy for enhancing women's voice and claim-making capacity.

Most of the projects have contributed to placing gender issues on the public and political agenda, supported by awareness creation on specific issues among different target groups. This in it turn has contributed to changes such as improvements in legal frameworks and enhanced knowledge of traditional leaders, government and community members.

The extent to which the interventions contributed to real improvements for women remains to be seen. In almost all projects the socio-cultural sustainability of the instances of 'changed discourse' and 'changed attitudes' is at risk. This risk may be less in projects that also involved 'professionals', such as teachers, public officers, lawyers, journalists and religious leaders, besides community volunteers. In those projects social and cultural standards that form the basis of women's discrimination are discussed. Gender equality is embedded within the work of these professionals and this contributes to continuation of dialogue addressing root causes of gender inequality and its many manifestations.

However, the duration of the Fund was too short-lived to change social norms and traditions that underpin the discrimination of women. In addition, the MDG3 Fund grantees did not sufficiently challenge prevailing standards and patterns through community dialogues or by challenging the perceptions of individual men and women.

5.2 Changing social standards and practice is not realized structurally

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) has been placed on the political agenda, but changing socio-cultural standards and practices, which is key for reducing GBV, remains difficult. Most MDG3 Fund projects invested in advocacy to eliminate GBV. Activities undertaken included campaigns to raise public awareness and conferences. These activities aim to initiate a debate with public officers and politicians in order to sensitize them on the practice and prevalence of GBV. The MDG3 Fund projects addressing GBV contributed to changes in the enabling environment for civil society and the empowerment of women. There is anecdotal evidence of women feeling empowered because they gained knowledge on their rights and on how to claim their rights in case of violation, and of women feeling more confident to speak out and join women's groups to strengthen their position in the fight against GBV. Only limited information is available on the involvement of men and changed attitude and behavior regarding GBV among men. Evaluation reports describe that it remains difficult for women to stand up for their rights and fight GBV. The report highlights that there is a need for continued action and for reinforcing the link between normative change (social norms, cultural patterns) and structural action by a more responsive state.

Female leadership

Interventions on female leadership have resulted in increased political participation of women at local level but not at national level. Lack of voice prevents women from ensuring that their needs are taken into account. To address this, the MDG3 Fund aimed at enhancing the participation and representation of women in national parliaments and political bodies. Female leadership has emerged; women have gained knowledge on their political rights and governance processes, they feel more confident and have acquired leadership attitudes and positions. Women's political participation has mainly increased in local governance bodies, rather than in national parliaments. Civic education programs and

advocacy have contributed to increased participation of women in politics, but meaningful involvement of women in decision-making bodies still is challenged. Longer-term support for female leaders is required and has to be combined with tackling social and cultural norms at the level of communities and government.

Women's labor issues

Labor-oriented organizations have become increasingly aware of women worker's issues, but follow-up of this awareness remains unclear. Gender gaps in earnings and productivity persist across all forms of economic activity, despite increased labor force participation. The majority of the MDG3 Fund projects targeting employment and equal opportunities on the labor market applied advocacy and lobbying to influence the development, adoption and application of international conventions and national labor laws. The projects contributed to increased awareness of women worker's issues among labor-oriented organizations, trade unions and policymakers. However, the projects did not document to what extent this increased awareness translated into effective legal frameworks, safe and healthy working environments, or increased access of women to the labor market and increased incomes. Some projects resulted in small improvements in the working environment, but only anecdotal evidence is available. There is some anecdotal evidence that describes how women workers increased their knowledge and understanding of their workers' rights. However, it is unclear to what extent these results contributed to a better social and political position of women.

The MDG3 fund also contributed to the strengthening of trade union networks, but it is not clear to what extent this networking contributed to improved services and to sustainable integration of new approaches and tools in the way they work.

Women's land rights

Improving the property and inheritance rights for women remains a tough issue. Women are often disadvantaged in both statutory and customary land tenure systems. They have weak property or contractual rights to land and even when legislation is in place to strengthen their position, lack of legal knowledge and weak implementation may limit their ability to exercise their rights. The MDG3 Fund adopted two main strategies: capacity building of women's organizations, and lobbying and advocacy to raise awareness regarding land rights for women. At a local level the MDG3 Fund projects have made a difference by organizing women, informing women of their rights, supporting claim-making actions of women and creating awareness among local decision makers. In some cases, local practice has changed. The MDG3 Fund projects do not seem to have contributed to fundamental changes in customary and statutory laws in favor of women accessing land. They did not sufficiently address socio-cultural standards and traditions at individual and community level. Not many individual women effectively obtained land titles yet. It is clear that effectively acquiring land titles cannot be influenced by organizations alone, but a multi-stakeholder approach seems lacking in most of the projects.

6

Thematic study III: How effective was support for international lobbying and advocacy?

Summary

Thematic study III: How effective was support for international lobbying and advocacy?
The International Lobbying and Advocacy (ILA) evaluation report of the Netherlands co-financing program MFS II has established that members of the Alliances have contributed mostly to agenda setting. Fewer results were achieved in influencing policies and there is hardly any evidence of contributions to implementation and changes in practice. The ILA evaluation team explains that this is not surprising, as most interventions were aimed at agenda setting, and changing policies and practices would have taken far more time.

Another conclusion of evaluation report is that besides influencing existing policymaking processes, some alliances succeeded in bringing new issues to the forefront. Results were achieved with private, state and civil society targets, although private sector engagement was limited to the cluster of sustainable livelihoods and economic justice.

All alliances contributed to the articulation of Southern CSOs' voices and helped convey them to policymakers, for example at the African Union and UN. Support from the alliance members to their Southern partners often involved facilitating interaction with international organizations or national governments, rather than support for lobbying and advocacy campaigns or capacity development in the South.

The evaluation draws attention to the disconnect between high-level policy discussions in international forums and the local challenges for CSOs engaged in for example child rights at community level. Their reality seems far removed from the good intentions expressed in the international forums. The question arises of who will bridge the gap between global policy discussions and local reality.

Reader's guide
This chapter draws from the '*MFS II Joint Evaluation of International Lobbying and Advocacy: Endline report*', conducted by Wageningen University and Research Centre (Arensman et al., 2015; see Annex 8). It is not an integral representation of the report. IOB refers to this document for the references.

The sections 6.1-6.3 present summaries of three case studies. First of all, the SRHR Alliance's program works towards equal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services and the freedom of people to make informed choices about their own sexuality. The Together for Change Alliance (T4C) focuses on the improvement of the wellbeing and protection of children and young people. The Ecosystem Alliance (EA) aims to strengthen the livelihoods and ecosystems in developing countries. It focuses on palm oil, soy, biofuels and mining products.

The ILA evaluation encompasses a wide range of *International Lobbying and Advocacy* (ILA) programs of eight alliances, financed under the MFS II subsidy framework. Their ILA covers three thematic clusters: (1) sustainable livelihoods and economic justice; (2) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); and (3) protection, human security and conflict prevention. The ILA priority result areas defined for the evaluation are: (1) agenda setting, (2) policy influencing, and (3) changing practice.

The MFS II ILA evaluation report highlights that the processes of policy change in which the alliances are involved are long-term and highly complex, with a multitude of actors involved. Therefore, changes are rarely achieved with a specific alliance as the sole contributor. Furthermore, the classic understanding of ILA as relatively independent influencers and targets is not easy to uphold. Realities of present-day governance do not comply with the idea of ILA being oriented towards influencing understanding of decision-makers, views and actions. Instead, influencing takes place in collaborative structures, which to some extent may blur the distinction between lobbyists, advocates and targets.

6.1 SRHR Alliance: influence is achieved mostly at Dutch national level

The overall program of the SRHR Alliance[15], entitled 'Unite for Body Rights' (UFBR), works towards equal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, as well as to the freedom for all people to make informed choices about their own sexuality. The MFS II evaluation focuses on influence of the Alliance on: 1) the development cooperation budget of the Dutch government for SRHR; and 2) the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the post-2015 processes.

[15] The SRHR Alliance consists of five participating Dutch organizations: Amref Flying Doctors, CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, dance4life foundation, Rutgers WPF and Simavi (with Rutgers WPF as the lead agency).

6.1.1 Context: The Netherlands has a strong reputation for supporting SRHR

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all continues to be an elusive goal. Globally, a great deal of controversy remains regarding SRHR issues, especially those judged to be sensitive or taboo subjects (e.g. safe abortion, SRHR for young people, discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity). This results in devastating on-the-ground implications in terms of individuals' ability to claim their SRHR. Globally, advancements in SRHR have continued to lag behind other development cooperation goals. Each day, preventable childbirth and pregnancy complications lead to the deaths of approximately 800 women, with 99 percent of these deaths occurring in developing countries. Women often bear the heaviest burden of SRHR challenges and certain groups face much higher risks of compromised SRHR, including individuals with lower socio-economic status, young people, oppressed or marginalized populations and residents of rural areas.

SRHR advocates have identified the last several years as a critical period for SRHR in the international policy arena and have consequently ramped up their efforts to impact agenda setting. At the same time, opponents of SRHR[16], though by no means newly active, also became more vocal and better organized in their efforts to prevent progressive SRHR developments and in some cases have attempted to weaken existing international agreements on SRHR issues.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the discussions on the post-2015 agenda are two concurrent international processes that are of particular importance. Although the two processes are distinct, SRHR advocates strived for the ICPD process to have a significant influence on the post-2015 development agenda.

The Netherlands has a long history as one of the leading countries providing support for SRHR worldwide. The Dutch reputation is built particularly on support for 'taboo' topics that others find too sensitive to address. Along with other 'like-minded' countries, the Netherlands takes a leading role in providing financial support for the improvement of SRHR – particularly on topics such as safe abortion.

In 2013, the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation formalized her new development cooperation policy, including the intention to increase the role of trade in development, and laid out extensive cuts to the development cooperation budget beginning in 2014. This new policy may have had implications for SRHR, as interventions are generally heavily dependent on aid. The shift in government policy, focusing on trade and phasing out aid in certain transition countries, may have put rights-based and sensitive SRHR issues at risk.

Nevertheless, through governmental, policy and economic shifts over the past years, SRHR has remained a policy priority and has gained and maintained broad support in the Dutch parliament.

16 Groups opposed to SRHR at international level include the Holy See, conservative Christian CSOs from the United States, certain Arab and African nations and other countries such as the Russian Federation (p. 323).

6.1.2 Strategy: focus on insider approach in the Netherlands and at international level

Initially, the Alliance defined its overall objective as maintaining an enabling environment for SRHR in the Dutch government. It was measured by examining whether the percentage of Dutch development cooperation budget allocated to SRHR was maintained each year. To reach this objective, a key outcome to be achieved was the inclusion of SRHR as a main issue in new development cooperation policies at national level. This outcome was to be achieved through building support for SRHR both in the Dutch MFA and in parliament. This support was to be ensured by working towards building expertise, convincing and encouraging positive action for SRHR among members of parliament and the MFA. This suggests an approach based mostly on insider strategies.

During the course of the program, the organizations made some changes in the approach they took. Instead of focusing exclusively on the percentage of ODA budgeted for SRHR, the SRHR Alliance became more active in monitoring how the SRHR budget was spent and responding to that.

As parliament has agreed with the policy laid out by the minister, alliance work currently focuses on influencing its implementation, which has to be done mostly through the MFA. The Alliance has therefore (temporarily) shifted emphasis to the MFA vis-à-vis the parliament and directs its attention to policymakers.

At the international level, the overall goal at the start of the program was defined as having a renewed progressive agenda on SRHR at UN level after 2014. This progressive agenda covers a wide range of topics, such as recognition of sexual and reproductive rights, comprehensive sexuality education and support for safe abortion. It was promoted largely through insider strategies. Good contacts between Alliance members and UN agencies were thought to facilitate the progressive representation of SRHR in international documents. Another effective approach was to inform country delegations to relevant UN meetings about SRHR and convincing them of the need for progressive SRHR. The envisaged change was to be achieved by involving CSOs from the global South in advocacy at the international level – primarily through their own governments – and by having progressive civil society voices jointly communicate one clear message. The SRHR Alliance aimed to facilitate those changes by maintaining a high level of trust with civil society partners, achieving good integration within larger networks of CSOs and building capacity of CSO partners, especially towards international advocacy.

Another approach to achieving change through UN processes was identified as directly influencing national governments, including the Netherlands, and regional bodies such as the EU to prioritize SRHR. For the Alliance's ILA work at the international level, the importance of a good relationship with the Dutch MFA is also emphasized. In the course of the program, the contact between the SRHR Alliance and the Ministry has deepened, and the nature of the work has changed.

In the course of the program, more and more attention was paid to collaboration with Southern partners. In several cases the SRHR Alliance sponsored the participation of their

partner organizations in key meetings at international level. This was done to develop the partners' international advocacy capacity, to contribute directly to the inclusion of various civil society and youth organizations in international processes and to increase the opportunities for partners to work with and influence their own governments to achieve positive SRHR outcomes. Integrating local partners in ILA processes is also part of a strategy to encourage Southern countries with progressive views on SRHR to contest the oppositional stance of some groups that SRHR is an exclusively 'Western issue'.

Alliance members have stressed the importance of joint advocacy and transnational advocacy networks. When dealing with complex and uncertain international processes of this type, working with a trusted network of like-minded individuals and organizations at the national, regional and international levels is important.

6.1.3 Effectiveness: agenda setting achieved at national and international level

The majority of changes achieved in the Netherlands and the UN agencies concern agenda setting. Changes in the Netherlands were achieved on the positions and commitments of the Dutch government and parliamentarians on SRHR and ODA funding allocated to SRHR. Agenda-setting changes in the Netherlands included public statements and commitments made by the Dutch government on funding for SRHR, as well as questions and formal requests from the parliament. The main agenda-setting changes at international level included the mobilization of broad civil society in favor of SRHR around the meetings of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD). They also included invitations to SRHR Alliance members and partners to join official government delegations to UN processes, and invitations to participate in closed meetings and associations with UN agencies around the ICPD review process. Invitations were also extended to the SRHR Alliance to participate as a collaborative partner with the MFA around international processes. Other agenda-setting changes involved the increased integration of Southern partner organizations in international SRHR advocacy networks; and having key points included in international-level debates and documents.

Alliance members took a leading role in reinforcing partnerships and growing networks of like-minded CSOs. They built and strengthened formal and informal relationships and partnerships with the MFA, developed Southern partners' international advocacy and network capacity and participated in formal meetings around the ICPD and post-2015 processes. Alliance members and partners, as well as external experts, universally stressed the importance of pro-SRHR CSO-networks pursuing a common goal.

Changes in SRHR policy in the Netherlands include steps to ensure that the appearance and maintenance of SRHR remains a spearhead development priority through changing governments. In addition, official commitments were made to SRHR funding levels; SRHR was selected as a policy priority in eight partner countries and it was assured that the importance of SRHR expertise would be stressed in the embassies of those countries that were to move from aid to trade. Another change was the new policy to increase the transparency in reporting on SRHR funding allocation and results.

Policy changes at international level centered mostly around CPD meetings and the ICPD review process. These changes included the defense of previously accepted language and some progress in language made at UN-level meetings (especially CPD meetings). They also included progressive outcomes from all five regional conferences and thematic meetings in the ICPD process and the link between ICPD and post-2015 in the CPD 47 (2014) outcome document and in the outcome document from CSW 58 (2014).

ILA influence reflecting changing practice was least commonly observed and often represented longer-term outcomes following a series of necessary lower-level outcomes along the way.

6.2 T4C Alliance: ACPF influences agendas and policies at the African Union through advising

The Ethiopian-based *African Child Policy Forum* (ACPF) is one of the Southern partners in the Together for Change (T4C) Alliance.[17] The alliance was set up to alleviate poverty by strengthening North-South and South-South relationships, focusing on improving the welfare and protection of children and young people. ACPF is an international pan-African not-for-profit institution of policy research and dialogue. It aims to contribute to child welfare in Africa by putting children and specific issues regarding their rights and welfare on the public and political agendas. ACPF is the only institution of its kind on the African continent, and is located in Addis Ababa, in the vicinity of the African Union (AU).

6.2.1 Context: child rights are insufficiently safeguarded in African political agendas

The main problem regarding pan-African child rights is that they are not yet sufficiently safeguarded in political and public agendas on the African continent. All over Africa, children are officially acknowledged as the future of the continent, while at the same time exploitation of children and violation of their rights is wide-spread. All kinds of other developments further shape the pan-African landscape and political agendas and priorities. Recent examples include the Mali conflict and the Ebola epidemic, that have taken away space and attention from child rights agendas.

ACPF was set up in 2003 against the backdrop of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990). In 2000, the 'Africa Fit for Children' (AFFC) framework was endorsed. This posed enormous challenges for African governments as it meant putting children on the agenda. The AU and its subcommittee – the African Committee of Experts on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) – monitor the implementation of the Charter. The pan-African nature of ACPF therefore provides a well-placed organizational link to support the AU and the Committee in this task.

[17] The Dutch organization Investing in Children and their Societies (ICS) is the lead co-financing agency (CFA); other partners in the T4C Alliance are Wilde Ganzen / IKON, Wereldkinderen and SOS Kinderdorpen.

6.2.2 Strategy; insider advisory approach in targeting the regional pan-African level

The overall aim of the ACPF advocacy is to contribute to child welfare. It aims to support a culture in Africa in which child rights are embraced and to put children and specific issues regarding child rights and welfare on the public and political agendas. Working towards these aims, ACPF seeks to: (1) improve awareness of children's rights by building knowledge, providing evidence and research and speaking out on the issues to address; (2) provide a platform for dialogue; and (3) strengthen CSOs and government capacity to effectively change and implement pro-child programs and policies.

ACPF works on the global level, the regional (pan-African) level, the national (African) government level and the national African CSO level, and through inter-agency partnerships.

From the choice of targets it becomes clear that ACPF mainly pursues an inside-track strategy for ILA. It focuses on policymakers and provides advice through evidence-based research. ACPF's most direct partner is the AU, which includes the African Committee of Experts on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), selected CSOs and international forums. The AU and its ACERWC can be seen as the core strategic partner for ACPF to influence national African governments to embrace child rights. This has been the approach from the beginning and it is the main reason why ACPF has its office in Addis Ababa, close to the African Union. ACPF also aspired to influence national governments and CSOs, but this was less of a priority.

ACPF works as a research center advocating evidence-based messages on child rights. Rather than engaging in public campaigning, ACPF pursued an informative mode of working, focusing on mediation and consensus building. When it comes to partnerships and cooperation, ACPF's insider advocacy strategies seem to rely partly on silent diplomacy and personal relations, especially at pan-African level. ACPF considers consensus essential to advance the advocacy message and to create space for support to various processes. Box 1 illustrates the advocacy approach of ACPF.

Box 1 *ACPF's main advocacy tool: African Report on Child Wellbeing*

The *African Report on Child Wellbeing* is ACPF's 'flagship publication'. It is referred to as a 'message-driven advocacy report' and focuses on different thematic areas relating to government accountability on child wellbeing. The research is conducted by ACPF staff aided by external consultants, while the themes are defined through consultations with CSOs and governments, which also provide information about the specific issues to pursue and government performance. The report provides evidence on the state of affairs of themes per country and it presents its 'child-friendly index' (CFI), which is used as a monitoring and naming-and-shaming instrument, but which also includes policy recommendations related to child wellbeing.

6.2.3 Effectiveness: ACPF successfully influences agendas and policies mainly at pan-African level

ACPF's advocacy program has helped in setting more child-friendly agendas, influenced policies and in some cases changed practices regarding child rights and wellbeing.[18] Most changes were seen at the pan-African level, specifically at the AU and its African Committee of Experts on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC). Here, strong working relations with ACPF were established over the years, also prior to the MFS II period. There is also an increasing interest in the ACPF advocacy message at the global level. UNICEF, UNCRC and UNHRC, but also a child rights organization such as Kids Rights in the Netherlands, expressed a keen interest in ACPF's research work and its view on child rights in Africa. At national governmental and civil society levels, fewer results were reported and they appeared to be spin-offs of earlier ACPF work, going back as far as 2011 or even earlier. Most outcomes were identified in the result areas of agenda setting and policy influence.

An achievement spanning across all result areas is ACPF's contribution to favorable conditions for its advocacy work. These conditions provide space, especially at the pan-Africa arena and via the AU channels, to set agendas, influence policy and change practice on multiple levels. This achievement is not only demonstrated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between ACPF and the African Union Commission in 2012 and the observer status granted to ACPF by ACERWC in 2010, but also in the rising appearance of ACPF in global and supranational forums. ACPF has built strong relations within the AU. For example, based on their close cooperation with the AU and ACERWC, ACPF was asked to support the AU/ACERWC Campaign in the ratification of the African Charter.

In terms of agenda setting at the regional pan-African level, outcomes relate to raising awareness on the issues advocated and the role of ACPF as such; targets reacting to ACPF and taking action on the issues advocated; the opening of closed space or creating space and influencing terms of public debate on the pan-African level by bringing in issues; supporting the AU and the use of ACPF reports.

At the level of African national governments, ACPF contributed to making governments aware of issues at stake and encouraged them to use the reports. Through evidence-based messages, ACPF has managed to engage political leaders and governmental staff. They consult ACPF behind closed doors on the issues researched, gaps identified and recommendations for policy change.

At the level of African civil society, ACPF has contributed to raising awareness, influencing public debate and opening space for dialogue and cooperation among CSOs and between CSOs and the government. Their reports were used by other CSOs as evidence-based advocacy tools.

[18] It should be noted that the interconnectedness of the various ACPF programs, projects and organizational activities made it difficult to trace the Dutch funding precisely, considering that the MFS II funding was not project bound, but was meant as institutional support to ACPF as an organization.

Policy institutions, CSOs and research institutes invited ACPF to provide input for policy discussions and technical discussions. This can all be understood as awareness raised on the issues advocated, targets reacting on the issues advocated and opening closed spaces. For example, the UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) and UNICEF invited ACPF in Geneva to provide expert input. Furthermore, ACPF was asked for input by various inter-agency working groups (IAWGs), cooperating with PLAN International, Save International, UNICEF, World Vision, REDLAMYC (a Caribbean and Latin American network for child rights) and others, at both international and regional levels. No changes were observed in adopted policies. However, some ongoing policy change processes were identified in which ACPF delivered substantial input.

At the global level, Ethiopia, the Netherlands and Australia are examples of countries where policy was changed according to ACPF's research findings. These countries ratified the Inter-country Adoption Guidelines. At the regional pan-African level, in April 2014, the AU sought ACPF's support for policy input on child marriages, which resulted in the Declaration on Child Marriages, which was adopted by the ACERWC. Changing practices involves long-term processes, which explains why less outcomes were achieved in this area.

Aspects that were crucial for successful advocacy work by ACPF include credibility, visibility, tested advocacy strategies for outreach, and supportive strategic partners. The quality of ACPF's research has remained rich and is widely appreciated by everyone who uses it. It proves to be the backbone of ACPF's success. The reputation of ACPF at the higher level is well established, whereas at national governmental and civil society level its voice is not sufficiently heard. Box 2 illustrates this disconnect between high-level and grassroots PILA efforts.

Box 2 *High-level versus grassroots PILA engagement – two sides of the same coin?*

The post-2015 agenda was seen by ACPF as an opportunity to influence the regional and global discussions and agendas. The way ACPF has seized this opportunity shows its flexibility and resilience, ambition and commitment to bringing forward the message of child rights. The fact that ACPF was one of the few African voices in this post-2015 process, underlines its overall reputation as an African advocate on children's well-being. However, a critical note is in order as to the relevance of these worldwide and mostly high-level discussions on the post-2015 agenda for those at community and village levels engaged in child rights and wellbeing, challenged by a daily reality that seems far from the good intentions expressed in the international fora. This apparently demonstrates a serious disconnect between high-level discussions and local challenges. The question arises of who will bridge this gap and whether this should also be part of ACPF's advocacy mandate, seeking ground level translations that could narrow the gap and stimulate local CSOs and community-based organizations to join hands with ACPF.

6.3 Ecosystem Alliance: Influence achieved at global level, but without a link to local level

The ILA evaluation categorizes the Ecosystem Alliance (EA) under the thematic cluster ‘Economic Justice’. The EA consists of three partners: its lead partner IUCN NL, Both ENDS and Wetlands International. These three organizations have complementary working experience, expertise and interests. Both ENDS and IUCN NL have more experience with working at the local level and they have a more extensive partner network. Wetlands International complements the alliance with strong technical input and a network of scientific partners.

The EA designed a common framework that aims to: (1) strengthen the livelihoods and ecosystems in developing countries; (2) change the policies and practices around four global commodities (palm oil, soy, biofuels and mining products) in favor of local communities and their ecosystems; and (3) ensure an enabling policy environment at international level for climate change adaptation and mitigation mechanisms.

6.3.1 Context: aid and trade agenda holds possibilities, but engaging is difficult in practice

There is a long-standing awareness of the issue of natural ecosystem degradation, which is reflected in policy debates at national and international gatherings. Many of the threats to ecosystems and the causes of poverty are seen to have international and economic origins, and should thus be addressed at the level of national governments and international forums, as well as through changes within multinational companies. For example, there is a lack of transparency and accountability around land deals and tenure titles between national and international companies and developing countries. Environmental or forestry legislation is regularly undermined, control mechanisms are weak and information about the valuation of land is imprecise and often lacking. Local populations in general experience a decreased natural resource base and the loss of household revenues. There are fewer employment opportunities and communities or people exercising their rights are increasingly threatened.

In the Netherlands, the political situation has changed as the minister for International Trade and Development Cooperation now attempts to combine the aid and trade agenda. This has created new dynamics with more possibilities to link international trade to development cooperation in governmental policies and vice versa. Nonetheless, EA staff assessed that it has become more difficult to lobby successfully for issues like ecosystems within the Dutch national policy arena. Although there are changes in the agendas of politicians and policymakers, as we will explain in section 6.3.3, this apparently does not mean that there is an increased willingness to change policies and practices as well.

6.3.2 Strategy: EA focused on insider interaction

In its Theory of Change, the EA assumes that positive international and bilateral policy changes, particularly in relation to global public goods, will influence national policies and benefit the reality for local communities. Furthermore, local realities and experiences are crucial to underpin their lobby at international and bilateral levels.

Each of the EA's ILA campaigns or projects under evaluation has its own specific strategy, designed to be effective in its given context towards its defined goal. There is, however, an obvious common element: an insider approach. Direct contact with the target group is a crucial element of the EA ILA strategy and influencing takes place by convincing, sharing information, building relationships, connecting people to each other and related activities. The EA hardly uses the outsider advocacy strategy of building pressure on the target group from the outside, for example through the media and mass mobilization.

The EA's ILA work comprises several linked strategies and interventions. The first of these is lobbying and advocacy in international forums and at EU/Dutch government levels, for example through commodity roundtables on sustainable palm oil, responsible soy and sustainable biomass. The second is engagement with the private sector, focusing on the Dutch and EU private sector with supply chains linked to the program countries. The final strategy involves supporting and engaging with Southern partners, to strengthen their efforts to negotiate with both private sector stakeholders and governments with regard to changing policy and practice.

Within the EA, the three organizations work together as partners, but they have kept their own identity, organizational culture and lobby and advocacy approach. They identified and used the complementary aspects of their organizations and added value by cooperating more closely on some issues and working more independently on others. Nevertheless, coordination exists in all themes and issues: the three alliance members utilize each other's knowledge, insights, experience and networks.

All three organizations have their own networks that they use to influence political agendas, policies and practices. In addition to their own direct partners and network members, the EA also works with other organizations in the South. This involves financially supporting the organizations in return for their cooperation, especially in combining lobbying and advocacy efforts. The Alliance, especially IUCN NL, also has a strong network of Dutch companies operating around the globe. This facilitates cooperation with companies in key sectors and on important themes.

6.3.3 Effectiveness: changes were achieved but envisaged connection local-global is lacking

The EA's ILA programs have contributed to a variety of outcomes across the three priority result areas of agenda setting, policy change and implementation. In addition, the geographical spread is in line with the global character of the EA's ILA programs under evaluation. Some outcomes were identified at the level of Southern countries, but the EA ILA evaluation focused mainly on Dutch and international policy processes.

EA's focus on the Dutch national level was most visible in the efforts addressing flawed economic systems aimed at reaching a green and inclusive economy, where commitments from government and private sector are believed to contribute to policy change. In the bioenergy sector, significant results were achieved at the Dutch level. For example, an agreement was reached on sustainability criteria among Dutch government, industry and

NGDOs, as part of a broader agreement on energy and climate goals for 2020, the so-called SER Energy agreement.[19]

According to the evaluation, the outcomes achieved at different result levels in the palm oil sector may suffer from the strong focus on the *Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil* (RSPO), as its effectiveness as an international initiative is questioned. With regard to soy, too, agenda changes were observed, but due to a focus on an international certification system (the *Round Table on Responsible Soy*, RTRS) and a lack of local or regional policy changes, further progress seems difficult.

The mostly international efforts, directed at the UN and the EU and aimed at ensuring ecosystem-based climate change mitigation, show relevant intermediate results. However, their final results can only be assessed after 2015, when there is a new climate agreement.

Some specific aspects of the approach to ILA in the EA's work have contributed to the outcomes. For example, all three EA members invested in the scientific evidence base of their advocacy – Wetlands International the most, Both ENDS the least – and this has paid off. This approach has given the alliance an expert profile, on top of the strong track record that all three EA members already had before the MFS II program started. This enabled them to make strong contributions. The EA's insider strategy, their capability for long-term commitment and engagement in the issues and in relevant international discussions and institutions and especially Wetlands International's science-based and cooperative approach contributed to the changes achieved.

Partnering with companies is another factor that contributed to results, for specific organizations as well as for the EA as a whole. The 'Leaders for Nature' partnership between IUCN NL and a number of well-known companies is unique within the EA. For IUCN NL, this partnership is an asset in its lobby towards governments and other actors. Both ENDS and Wetlands International are not involved with companies in the same way, but their engagement with company-led roundtables on palm oil and soy is also a lobbying strategy in which partnering with companies plays an important role. On a number of occasions, private sector organizations and alliances together were able to introduce change. This is one of the examples in the MFS II ILA evaluation where there is no black-and-white distinction between lobby allies and lobby targets. Instead, it is a grey area where an actor identified as a lobby target is not necessarily the enemy and where an ally can still be – and usually is – a lobby target. Structural partnering and incidental cooperation with lobby targets are common strategies in the world of ILA. The EA utilizes the different opportunities in order to achieve results.

Most of the outcomes to which the Ecosystem Alliance claims to have contributed, have been achieved in cooperation with other civil society actors. In particular, these concern the

[19] The criteria for solid biomass include the criteria set in the NTA8080 standard and additional criteria for sustainable forest management, indirect land use change and carbon debt. Moreover, parties have agreed to use these sustainability criteria as their input in the European discussions on sustainability of solid biomass (p. 240).

UN Convention on Biodiversity, biomass issues in the Netherlands, biofuels issues with the EU, palm oil issues with the RSPO, soy issues with the RTRS and climate change issues with the UNFCCC. Two outcomes are excepted: one related to palm oil, for which Wetlands International was most likely the only contributor, and IUCN-NL's outcomes related to the Dutch Green Deal. Those outcomes might not have materialized without those two actors.

Considerable ILA results were achieved at Dutch national and at international level. However, the foreseen connection between local and global policy influencing could not be established at any of the three different result levels. The evaluation finds very limited evidence of activities at the national level in developing countries — with or through partners in the South — that contributed to outcomes on the international level. That is remarkable, since the EA's ToC assumes that outcomes on the international level contribute to policy changes in Southern countries and, vice versa, that Southern countries' CSOs supported by the EA, should achieve policy changes in their countries that then contribute to policy changes at international level. According to one respondent 'the country programs were more advanced than the ILA, and the foreseen connection between the two levels never materialized'. Therefore, the evaluation could not lead to the conclusion that the Southern partners had a strong added value in the ILA achievements.

7

Country study: How effective was PILA support in Kenya and Mozambique?

Summary

The environment for PILA in Kenya and Mozambique is becoming more restrictive, even though both countries have progressive constitutions that provide for freedom of association, assembly and expression. In practice, the political leaders determine to what extent civil society and their organizations can utilize this space.

Despite all the restrictions, CSOs are occasionally able to influence policies.
In Kenya, CSOs are mostly occupied with pushing for the implementation of the constitution. Moreover, CSOs achieved some success in PILA campaigns. For example, they were invited to policy discussions and several policies were either drafted or finalized, such as the gender policy (2011), national social protection policy (2011) and health, water and food security policies (2011).

PILA by CSOs in Mozambique was successful regarding violence against women, women's political participation, corruption and transparency and MPs pension schemes. Government officials have started to recognize the role of CSOs. However, whenever CSOs succeeded in influencing policy, the even greater challenge was to have these policies budgeted and implemented.

CSOs' PILA agenda is determined by the space that government allows them; engagement on politically sensitive issues is blocked. Fear of bureaucratic reprisals, such as arbitrary cancellation of their registration or freezing of their bank accounts, results in self-censorship by CSOs. Under such restrictive situations, CSOs are more vulnerable and less effective unless they participate in strong alliances, which tend to offer protection and enforce space. In general, IOB found that CSOs are often forced to defend their operational space, at the expense of campaigning and actually influencing policies.

The study found that donors tend to equate civil society with CSOs and that support has focused on professionalized organizations, thereby excluding other organizations that may be more successful in mobilizing the population, such as informal groups or religious organizations. Furthermore, donors generally tend to neglect parliament as a state interlocutor.

Reader's guide
This chapter draws from two country studies that IOB commissioned on the practice of PILA by CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique. IOB refers to these documents for the references. The Mozambique report (Taela, 2015) can be found in Annex 6.

Section 7.1 shows how CSOs in Kenya struggle to safeguard their rights as laid down in the constitution and focus on creating space for PILA engagement. Kenyan CSOs in the country study contributed to strengthening the supporting functions for PILA. This absorbed all their attention; there was no room for designing PILA campaigns to influence agendas or change development policies.

Section 7.2 explains how Mozambican CSOs are starting to have some influence, although there is little change in policy implementation. The formal spaces for CSOs to engage with the Mozambique government are increasingly threatened. CSOs are starting to develop PILA approaches to influence policy and although they are successful in pushing for policy development, there seems to be a lack in policy implementation as there is no corresponding budget allocation.

7.1 Kenya: space for PILA engagement is safeguarded

The context in which CSOs in Kenya can employ PILA activities is relatively open, as it is formally protected by legislation. However, in practice this does not mean they can conduct their work freely, as implementation of the legal provisions remains a challenge. Furthermore, the Kenyan government is proposing amendments to legislation that undermines some of the provisions. CSOs therefore continue to advocate an enabling environment. The space available for various CSOs to engage in PILA depends on the agenda they pursue. CSOs that work in line with the governments' development agenda may be invited to participate in policy discussions, while others that are considered to be challenging government policy have to rely on creating their own space.

Kenyan CSOs generally choose to work through insider-strategies, through close collaboration with government representatives by providing advisory services, in order not to upset relations with the authorities.

Kenyan CSOs were able to influence some agendas, mainly through working in coalitions and by joining networks. However, it is not possible to link these results to changes in policy, let alone changes in practice. Most efforts have focused on creating space and developing the basic structures necessary for PILA, rather than on actual engagement in policy influencing through PILA campaigns. Overall, CSOs do not seem to be in touch with the immediate concerns and needs of the people living in local communities and they do not have strong grassroot links.

7.1.1 Context: a progressive constitution is no guarantee

The CSOs in Kenya have played a key role in the political process, pushing for democratic reforms in the 1980s and for constitutional review in the 1990s. As of 2010, after promulgation of a new constitution, CSO's focus has shifted to implementation of the constitution. This journey illustrates the position CSOs have held as watchdogs of the public office bearers, and their fight for space to influence the legislative frameworks and policy reforms. During this journey, the CSOs were on the forefront of promoting peace and security, supporting ethnic cohesion, fighting diseases, implementing micro-economic projects and providing basic services such as education, water and sanitation, healthcare, housing and food. For example, since 2008, CSOs have worked to support the establishment of the *National Cohesion and Integration Act 2008* and to develop the government's development plan *Kenya Vision 2030*.

The Kenyan constitution (2010) contains progressive provisions on freedoms of expression, press and peaceful assembly and association. It protects every person's right to freedom of expression including the freedom to seek, receive or impart information or ideas, freedom of artistic creativity, academic freedom as well as freedom of scientific research. Nevertheless, implementation is a challenge. CSOs are therefore mostly pushing for the implementation of the constitution, which would include major reforms in the government and public institutions.

The Kenyan constitution provides a number of instruments for participation in policy processes. Through invited space, CSOs work with the lobby targets, including legislative standing committees with departmentally relevant mandates to scrutinize government policies. But even though CSOs recognize the government's intention to engage civil society in development and policy making, as formal space was created for CSOs to participate in discussions, it is unclear how much influence they really have in this space.

Even though the constitution provides for the above-mentioned liberties, the government proposes or enacts legislation that undermines some of them. CSOs continue to advocate an enabling environment by mobilizing support locally, regionally and internationally. They target individuals and offices of influence, but do not work on a wider scope of civic engagement. For instance, CSOs seek support of opposition leaders locally, but this does not easily translate into support by the broader party membership.

The legislative environment in which CSOs operate in Kenya differs, depending on the nature of the organization. There are myriads of frameworks of registration with multiple overlaps, legal and regulatory. The Public Benefits Organization (PBO) Act (2014) which is a negotiated initiative of both the government and CSOs, provides an opportunity to harmonize regulation and coordination. However, it was never implemented due to proposed amendments by the Government which CSOs argue will make the Act very restrictive.

Legislation related to supporting functions for PILA is also becoming more restrictive. For example, legislation determining the space for 'communications and information' is quite restrictive on media houses and journalists. Most mainstream media is owned and controlled by political elites who are linked to government positions. Furthermore, legislation on security and countering terrorism impedes the freedom of assembly. The security laws

amendment bill that was introduced in 2014, gives powers to the cabinet secretary to designate where and when public meetings, gatherings or processions may be held. CSOs and the international community opposed these laws by making public statements and protesting in the streets. In a joint statement, nine Western countries criticized the law, calling it an infringement on democratic rights. Although the government was pressured to make amendments, the bill was signed into law by the president. The law may greatly affect the freedom of assembly, instill fear among journalists and increase censorship of content transmitted through media. Framing of messages by PILA actors will have to adhere to these conditions, as messages that appear to be against the government will put the respective CSOs into conflict with the authorities. Because of these increasing restrictions, CSOs are not able to effectively and pro-actively influence the legislative process.

The space available for various sectors to engage in PILA varies depending on the agenda. CSOs whose agenda aligns with the government's development agenda are invited by lobby targets to participate in policy discussions, while those whose agenda is considered invasive by the government, on matters of governance and democracy for example, have to fight for space and create their own influencing opportunities.

Mistrust between government and CSOs is partly explained by historical developments that go back to the period of the single party rule, when civil society confronted the state directly in the absence of formal political opposition parties. This constituted a major politicization of civil society movements in response to the increased authoritarianism of the single party rule. CSOs' PILA activities were mainly confrontational and the period was characterized by arrests and torture, and no open criticism of the regimes policies was allowed (Matanga, 2000). Accusations by the government and its public branding of CSOs as instruments of foreigners were rampant, creating endless tension between the politicians involved with government and the CSOs. This situation, according to the interviewed CSOs, portrayed the governments mistrust in CSOs and reduced the chances of invited space for policy discussions, particularly for matters the government perceives as questioning its operations.

7.1.2 Strategy: focused on creating space

Most of the CSOs' activities are aimed at creating space, given the complex context CSOs operate in. Their work mainly responds to a lack of knowledge among grassroots communities on matters of national interest, poor governance and slow democratization processes, corruption, inequality, and lack of respect for human rights and liberties. The CSOs formulate strategic objectives to address these gaps and challenges and engage in PILA where reforms are needed. Program implementation focuses mainly on activities that support creation and strengthening of supporting functions for PILA.

The ten CSOs that were part of the research engage with PILA targets to advise them and lobby for better policies and practice within the public and private sector. In general, CSOs work closely with the government, providing advice to develop strategies to reverse socio-economic pressures. However, they also advocate or move towards activism, depending on the response of the lobby targets to the agenda at hand.

7.1.3 Effectiveness: focus on supporting functions

The ten CSOs achieved results through various means, such as coalitions, partnerships and joining networks by drawing on capacities vested in different individuals and organizations. For example, CSOs were invited to different forums to support the government in policy discussions. Several policies were either drafted or finalized, such as the gender policy (2011), national social protection policy (2011) and health, water and food security policies (2011). But it is not possible to link these intermediate results to changes in policy implementation. This is due to lack of a Theory of Change, but also to poor monitoring and evaluation systems within the organizations.

Most efforts have focused on creating space and developing the basic structures necessary for PILA, rather than on actual engagement in policy influencing. The ten cases were among the CSOs that participated in the development of the new constitution and they celebrate this achievement. But the gains made by opening up space for PILA are quickly diminishing as a result of the enactment of restrictive legislation and lack of implementation of the constitution. This implies that the constitution may not serve PILA processes as intended.

Kenyan CSOs endeavored to gain international support in calling a halt to further restrictions on their operating space. In 2013, for instance, CSOs mobilized support from the UN against the provisions of the PBO Act 2013. The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya, stated that 'the amendments to the regulations of associations contained in the draft law could have profound consequences for civil society organizations in Kenya'. Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, cautioned that 'The Bill opens the door to undue State interference in civil society affairs as it allows a closer Presidential oversight of the board commanding the associations' regulatory body'. Advocacy work by CSOs and the international community put pressure on the Kenyan authorities leading the parliament to announce that the contentious amendments contained in Statute Law (Miscellaneous Amendments Bill, 2013), targeting PBOs, would be withdrawn. This is still the subject of consultation.

Nine out of ten of the cases deal with matters that are considered sensitive to government. These mainly concern governance, democracy and media. However, nearly all policies developed or reviewed in which the CSOs participated, concern the government's development agenda (Vision 2030), which does not necessarily address the immediate concerns and needs of the people living in local communities. Critics argue that participation of CSOs in the development process of some of these policies was merely through invited individuals, because of their technical expertise.

Overall, the ten cases were not effective in improving access to information to their constituencies. A successful exception is the HIV work, because it was presented in the media. Many citizens had access to information on the drafting of the constitution all the way to promulgation, and with overwhelming support. But CSOs often fail to attract sufficient media attention and to tailor the policy messages to target audiences.

7.2 Mozambique: some influence emerging, little change in policy implementation

A relatively progressive legal and political framework characterizes the Mozambique context, although recently there were attempts to reduce space for civil society. CSOs' engagements with the state have moved from a focus on complementing government service delivery to involvement in monitoring the provision of public services and PILA. The government's receptiveness to participation depends on how controversial the issue is. Interestingly, CSOs have recently started paying more attention to sensitive issues such as sexual minority rights, state and corporate responsibility and corruption.

CSOs generally stick to non-confrontational interaction with policymakers, as they believe that collaboration is the best approach to influence policies in Mozambique, given its history and political context. Nevertheless, the use of public advocacy strategies has intensified over the past years and CSOs have managed to mobilize the public through the media and awareness raising events in the communities.

There is evidence that CSOs were able to influence agendas and sometimes even policies, although implementation remains a challenge as action plans go unfunded. CSOs influenced the terms of public debate by providing new perspectives and alternative approaches. In response, the government created some formal space for CSO participation and consultation in policy processes.

7.2.1 Context: formal space is increasingly threatened

Mozambique has experienced critical political, economic and social changes with considerable implications for civil, political and economic rights. The rights granted by the Mozambican Constitution – 1990 and 2004 – which offer the foundation for exercising citizenship, including multi-party democracy, gender equality, and freedom of association, expression and press, are threatened by attempts to reduce the space for civil society and restrict people's rights.

There is a significant gap between Mozambique's relatively progressive legal and political framework, the practice of public institutions and people's living conditions. Economic growth was not translated into safer livelihoods and better quality of life. Gender, income and wealth inequalities are high as well as illiteracy rates. Access to public institutions and services is limited. Sociocultural arguments and political rhetoric are often deployed to legitimize the infringement of civil liberties, political rights and freedom of expression. Intimidation of more vocal civil society actors has increased. Political-business alliances and rent-seeking behavior are common practice, and are expected to increase with the mining boom Mozambique is experiencing.

CSOs' engagements with the state have changed significantly over the past ten years. From an almost exclusive focus on complementing government's efforts to deliver services, CSOs are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the provision of public services and in

policy influencing. The role of the Mozambican parliament is limited to the approval of the government's annual plans and budgets and laws (mainly proposed by the government or civil society). This is not only due to its weak technical capacity, but also and perhaps more importantly to its reduced constitutional powers.

The ten CSOs studied are all professionalized organizations established between the 1990s and mid-2000s. All ten are somehow involved in policy influencing work. A combination of policy influencing and service delivery work is a dominant feature of their work. While in the past CSOs intervened in non-controversial topics, more recently they broadened the issues they address and re-directed their attention to more contentious matters such as sexual minority rights, state and corporate responsibility and corruption. Other CSOs continued to focus on the sectors in which they have experience (mostly services), but now address controversial issues in that sector through PILA. For example, organizations working in the education sector are increasingly questioning ministerial decrees, such as one that banned pregnant students from attending day classes. They are producing evidence on sexual abuse in schools and denouncing corruption in the sector. In addition, CSOs have persisted in their efforts to bring culturally sensitive issues to the policy debate, such as initiation rites, premature marriages and abortion.

Space for CSOs varies depending on the sector and the issue at stake. While the health and education sectors have been more permeable to CSOs (because of the service delivery role), others were more insulated. The relationships between the government and CSOs are often ambiguous, fragile and ever changing, even in sectors relatively more open to their participation. The political system is captive of people and there are misconceptions about the role of CSOs. Government's openness to participation depends on how controversial the issue is.

OECD-DAC donors are increasingly supporting initiatives to foster public and social accountability and to strengthen civil society's role in policy dialogue. Donors have a tendency to equate civil society with CSOs (NGDOs), and support has generally focused on professionalized organizations. This implies that many other organizations, such as informal groups, religious organizations, and social media, that are often more successful in mobilizing the population, are excluded from support. Furthermore, it is argued that donors generally neglected parliament as a state interlocutor, particularly in light of the overall support provided to state institutions. There is a risk of diluting Parliament's law-making role and of the Executive taking over the Legislative, an already noticeable trend.

7.2.2 Strategy: CSO's PILA approaches are emerging

In terms of policy influencing strategies and practices, this country study found that while adopting a myriad of strategies, the ten selected CSOs preferred non-confrontational interaction (advising and lobbying). The general consensus is that collaboration is the best approach to influence policies in Mozambique, given its history and political context. The advising strategy depended on the space provided by the government and was fundamentally reactive. There is a shared feeling that CSOs are not making adequate use of existing invited spaces. Lobbying depended upon social capital, personal networks and the extent to which CSOs are able to tap into insider 'champions of participation'.

Despite the preference for non-confrontational interaction, the use of advocacy strategies, including naming and shaming, has intensified significantly over the past ten years. Public opinion was mobilized through a combination of collaboration with the media and awareness raising events in the communities. Marches and demonstrations are becoming more visible. For instance, there was a march for peace and against insecurity in Maputo City, on 31 October 2013.[20] The demonstration was directed against the politico-military tensions in the country, kidnappings, and rape and murder of women, and was attended by around 30,000 people. The use of social mobilization techniques to ensure this kind of civic engagement is starting to feature prominently in the strategic plans of CSOs. However, this strategy is not suitable for all issues, particularly if there is a risk of getting public opposition instead of support.

7.2.3 Effectiveness; policies are developed but not budgeted

Poor monitoring and evaluation frameworks and documentation negatively affected the assessment of effectiveness of CSOs' interventions. However, the study found that CSOs successfully brought forward their stances on violence against women, women's political participation, corruption and transparency and MPs pension schemes. Government officials have started to pay attention to issues raised by CSOs and are preparing to meet with CSOs. This includes considering evidence produced by CSOs and capitalizing on expert knowledge otherwise not accessible to them. In addition, government officials and members of parliament attended meetings convened by CSOs to present research findings and lessons learned from project implementation, and training delivered by CSOs. There is evidence that CSOs influenced the terms of public debate by bringing new perspectives and alternative approaches, for example in the discussions on land grabbing, the citizen budget and an integrated approach to gender-based violence.

In the area of land governance, there has been a timid move towards co-operation between civil society and private sector, fostered by increasingly competing interests over land, the government's policy of encouraging large-scale land investments, and the need to regulate and monitor emerging community-investor partnerships. CSOs were involved in "mediating" these partnerships, some of which resulted in confrontation, violence and court action. However, questions were raised about the legitimacy of CSO's participation as well as the potential effects of their "collaboration" with investors.

CSOs force the government to be more attentive, responsible, and communicative.
In response, the government is starting to pay attention to issues raised by civil society, indicating that the government is adapting and learning how to interact with civil society. Government has also created spaces for CSO participation in multi-sectorial coordination mechanisms and thematic working groups, and convenes consultation meetings and public hearings related to the development of specific documents. CSOs in turn convene meetings and invite relevant state institutions to present experiences derived from implementation

[20] The march was mobilized in opposition to the political-military conflict between FRELIMO and RENAMO which started in 2012 and the growing occurrence of kidnappings in Maputo City.

of interventions and research findings. They also provide technical assistance to state institutions by training public officials in related areas.

CSOs' participation in invited and claimed spaces is increasingly based on their watchdog role and improved policy dialogue capacity. However, besides some specific cases, there is not much evidence demonstrating that accountability mechanisms have improved.

There is little evidence of policies or strategies proposed by civil society. There is a discrepancy between civil society's engagement in strategic planning processes and in legal reform processes. While civil society's scrutiny of the national legal framework has been high and documented examples of civil society successfully influencing positive change are in the area of legislation[21], there are fewer examples of civil society's scrutiny of government policies and programs beyond research-focused CSOs.

Overall, the Mozambican government was responsive in terms of developing new strategies and action plans.[22] However, most plans are not budgeted and even when they are, many remain unfunded and, consequently, are not implemented.

21 The Land Campaign which culminated with the approval of the Land Law in 1997, the Law on Domestic Violence Against Women, approved in 2009, and more recently the contested Penal Code Review Bill and the Bills to amend the pension schemes of members of Parliament. In relation to this last point, it is important to note that whilst initially CSO managed to block its approval, the Bills were passed a couple of months later when most CSOs closed for the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

22 For instance, in the area of gender-based violence, the following steps were taken: establishment of Offices to Support Women and Children Victims of Violence; approval of the National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Violence Against Women (2008-2012); integration of the issue of gender-based violence in the National Plan for the Advancement of Women (2010-2014) and in the gender strategies of the ministries of health, education and interior; approval of the Multisectoral Mechanism for Integrated Assistance of Women Victims of Violence; and integration of gender-based violence in the training curriculums of key institutions.

8

How does CSO capacity for PILA develop?

Summary

The country studies in Kenya and Mozambique tell us that the CSOs' capability to anticipate, decide on a course of action and act upon windows of opportunity for PILA is relatively well-developed. CSOs focus heavily on national politicians with whom their leaders are often closely associated on a personal level, which makes them generally well-informed. The CSOs respond quickly when issues emerge or when they are invited to advise government. However, their ability to maintain their sense of direction and the coherence of their actions under duress is weaker. This is explained by the fact that most CSOs lack a clear long-term PILA strategy and tend to react to issues and incidences that pop up, besides dependency on donor agendas.

A major finding is that CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique that were part of this evaluation have weak connections with their grassroots. Their ability to identify, develop and maintain relations with the communities they claim to work for and represent – the poor and marginalized people – is seriously at stake. In addition, the CSOs experience problems with working in coalitions, which are generally weak or tend to fall apart. These weaknesses combined make CSOs vulnerable and less effective in restrictive contexts.

With regard to capacity development in PILA networks and coalitions, this report discusses the importance of collaboration and the challenges involved. Coalitions and networks can improve PILA effectiveness, but they are not a miracle cure. Findings from Kenya and Mozambique show that CSO platforms experience challenges concerning different expertise from members, weak communication and exchange of information between its members, lack of trust among CSOs, horizontal management structures and relations, and poor representation of peripheral voices and less influential groups. Furthermore, findings from the ILA (MFS II) evaluation confirm that North-South collaboration is not always that relevant for Southern partners. Alliances varied strongly in the extent to which they built on or involved Southern partners. It is important to pay attention to the power relations at play, as often there is no equality in the working relationship.

Reader's guide
Section 8.1 discusses findings on CSO capacity development for PILA in Kenya and Mozambique.

Section 8.2 discusses capacity in PILA networks and coalitions. Cooperation on an equal basis in networks and coalitions proves to be problematic, especially when it comes to North-South collaboration. Cooperation is indispensable, but it is not always perceived as relevant for Southern partners.

In its most essential form, capacity development is to be seen as the sum of continuous efforts of organizations to achieve their objectives and thus to stay relevant. The starting point for supporting capacity development is what CSOs in developing countries do to develop their own capacity for PILA. First and foremost, capacity development has to come from within. From this perspective, developing capacity for PILA is an evolutionary process that is founded on a particular CSO's work and experiences. Tacit knowledge, the informal knowledge about how and why things work, is an essential part of this. Regular reflection based on a ToC helps to systematize this knowledge and make it available for broader application. Outsiders like donors and development organizations may support capacity development, but only by facilitating endogenous processes that have started and are driven by the CSOs themselves.

8.1 CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique respond quickly, but with little coherence

IOB uses the 5C model to obtain an insight in the capacity of PILA[23] (also see Figure 3). The 5C model includes the following capabilities:

- to anticipate, decide on a course of action and act;
- to set objectives and deliver PILA results accordingly;
- to change the PILA strategy and approach if needed;
- to develop and maintain relations and mobilize support;
- to maintain direction and coherence.

8.1.1 To anticipate, decide on a course of action and act

This capability entails that CSOs are able to anticipate, decide on a course of action and act jointly upon windows of opportunity for PILA.

The strength of the CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique that were part of this study is that they are mostly based in the capital which means they have access to policymakers, are well connected with national government politicians and are well informed about political issues at national level. The information they gather through these networks mainly informs their PILA agenda. Usually they are quick to respond to issues or provide advice when they are invited to participate in policy consultations. On such occasions they may collaborate with 'participation champions' in government, like-minded CSOs, and donors.

[23] This model was created by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) for assessing organizational capacity.

CSOs are generally able to assess opportunities for PILA and can act upon changing circumstances. CSOs in both Kenya and Mozambique are also willing to take risks in order to reach their PILA goals. However, the haphazard approach CSOs take, appears to be at the expense of a longer-term vision and PILA agenda. For most CSOs their strategy is not well articulated and therefore it remains unclear how their work reflects their vision and an authentic organizational commitment.

Lack of ToC and PILA strategy
In both Mozambique and Kenya, CSOs do not have an explicit Theory of Change regarding what they hope to achieve through PILA. The Kenyan CSOs in this evaluation have strategic plans that address their strategic objectives, some concerning PILA. Most of the strategies relate to creating space for PILA, given the complex context CSOs in Kenya operate in. The CSOs formulate strategic objectives to address knowledge gaps and challenges concerning poor governance, inequality and a lack of respect for human rights and liberties, and engage in PILA where reforms are needed.

The country study of Mozambique reveals a growing emphasis on PILA in the strategic plans of the ten selected CSOs. It suggests that for the majority of them, policy-influencing work has emerged organically from their service delivery interventions. From the onset, a large part of the CSOs that engage in policy influencing focused their interventions on the analysis of government policies, but they have a critical agenda-setting role. For other CSOs this role has evolved from participation in invited spaces due to their role in service delivery. Thinking about strategies generally remains implicit or informal and strategic approaches are lacking.

The concept of a Theory of Change is relatively new to all the organizations that participated in the study. CSOs' plans and reports are mostly produced to satisfy donor reporting requirements. In Mozambique, some organizations have clearly articulated their policy influencing goals and strategies and are increasingly documenting their experiences and results. Others, despite their long-standing engagement with these matters and accumulated expertise, have not been able to articulate a coherent approach to their policy-influencing work, including the links with their other work. Their annual reports present little solid information about their work. Furthermore, CSOs in Mozambique proclaimed to be reactive rather than proactive, which they themselves identify as a problem with regard to influencing policy more strategically.

8.1.2 To set objectives and deliver PILA results accordingly
The second capability implies that CSOs are able to set PILA objectives and deliver results accordingly.

For both Kenya and Mozambique, findings mostly concern organizational capacity, rather than staff capacity, although of course the latter is an aspect of the former. IOB has found that in both countries donor funding is available for PILA activities and that CSOs generally have access to the necessary facilities and equipment. However, when comparing the selected CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique, it is clear that the Kenyan CSOs are generally more knowledgeable on (technical) issues related to PILA, in terms of understanding policy

processes, identifying key actors and using particular strategies to influence them. Also, for Kenyan CSOs it appears to be easier to access solid local knowledge and present evidence-based information relevant to decision-makers, because they either conduct their own research or have links with academic institutions. Nonetheless, an important impediment to the ability to deliver the results according to the PILA objectives set by CSOs in both countries is the overall lack of expertise to assess and address the needs of the communities.

Access to local knowledge
The CSO's in Kenya claim they have sufficient knowledge to support their work. They conduct research themselves or collaborate with universities and research institutions. The country case study reports that CSOs' policy influencing work in Mozambique is affected by the limited research capacity and lack of sociocultural, economic and political research. Institutional links between academia and CSOs are almost non-existent and few independent and sound research-oriented CSOs are active in stimulating policy debate. However, despite some capacity limitations, CSOs did manage to build technical knowledge and expertise around specific themes and issues over time and this has positively affected policy dialogue. CSOs' increased technical expertise, particularly when compared to some government institutions, grants them a considerable degree of legitimacy when they participate in policy-making processes. This is evident from invitations received by CSOs to present their research findings in government events and to provide training for government institutions in various areas. However, CSOs still possess limited competence to generate and present solid local evidence-based knowledge in a manner that is relevant to decision-makers.

All CSOs in both Kenya and Mozambique recognize the importance of research to their activities and have expressed the need for a better understanding of the political and economic context in which they operate. Many feel that they have acted upon opportunities as they arose and have not been able to steer the processes they want to influence. Relatedly, few are able to coherently articulate the links between research production, dissemination, appropriation and use. Dissemination of knowledge is critical for its appropriation and research-based CSOs are exploring ways of improving how they communicate their findings. Few CSOs systematically integrate research results into their PILA and training activities, and the majority does not have the human and technical capacity to document their interventions.

8.1.3 To change the PILA strategy and approach if needed

This capability assumes that CSOs are able to change their PILA strategy and approach, and to find novel solutions when the situation requires it.

In both Kenya and Mozambique CSOs have little ability to adapt and self-renew. Learning and reflection is not systematic, as CSOs' planning, monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) systems and practice are very weak in general. Especially when it comes to assessing the effectiveness of PILA efforts in a changing policy environment, M&E is extremely important, but it is inadequate in the selected Mozambican and Kenyan CSOs.

In Kenya, monitoring and evaluation is still at an early stage for most CSOs in this evaluation. It is an area that requires capacity strengthening, particularly when it comes to internal learning. CSOs analyze the external context and align their strategies accordingly, which increases their ability to deal with external factors. However, CSOs should carefully consider whether integration of external developments does not happen at the expense of maintaining the vision of the CSOs, as was the case sometimes.

In Mozambique, an area of weakness is the link between a CSO's Theory of Change, their monitoring and evaluation framework, and learning. The assessment of the effectiveness of CSOs' PILA interventions was negatively affected by poor monitoring and evaluation frameworks and documentation, which is associated with limited technical M&E capacity in general. Organizations are slowly adopting results-based management, but they face difficulties in defining appropriate indicators. Policy influencing is a relatively new area for most organizations and they are still studying how to develop adequate indicators to monitor their work in this area. Only a few organizational CSO reports include a discussion of their PILA engagements. Documented achievements of CSOs are generally expressed in terms of contribution of multiple actors, processes and strategies as part of coalition work.

8.1.4 To develop and maintain relations and mobilize support

This capability entails that CSOs are able to identify, develop and maintain relations with relevant policymakers, sources of knowledge and information and other relevant 'outsiders' and that they can mobilize their support when needed. Moreover, and particularly important for PILA, CSOs are able to identify, develop and maintain relations with their constituencies (the poor, beneficiaries, members, et cetera) and to represent them.

The CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique are generally relatively influential with policymakers. They are recognized by donors and receive substantial financial and non-financial support, such as technical assistance or political backing, and they can use the media when necessary. The CSOs generally have strong international contacts and participate in international networks. However, relations with local or regional counterparts are more difficult. Moreover, many CSOs have weak relations with their constituencies at the grassroots level, which negatively impacts their political and social legitimacy to make PILA claims. They do not have credibility or wide appeal in the community and grassroot support to the CSOs is minimal or non-existent.

CSOs' relations with policymakers, media and donors

All selected CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique are able to build, maintain and manage relationships with the media, policymakers and their donors. For a large part, this is due to the fact that cooperative strategies are preferred, which means decision-makers are generally open to engagement and may need CSOs for evidence-based information and advice.

When CSOs do decide to resort to more public strategies, because the situation requires it, they can count on the media to get their message across to the general population. Furthermore, CSOs are quite capable of tapping into foreign donor support for their PILA activities and can also rely on backing from their international counterparts when they are

subject to political intimidation or obstruction. Closing the ranks domestically, by forging strong relations with their local civil society counterparts, has proven to be more difficult. This will be discussed in more detail in section 8.2.

However, for strong PILA capacity it is not only important that CSOs can relate to their identified PILA targets, it is arguably even more important that they are in touch with their support base.

CSOs' constituency and support base at the grassroots

The connection between the selected CSOs and their constituency is weak in both Kenya and Mozambique.

Most influential CSOs in Kenya are predominantly based in Nairobi, with middle class leadership and limited outreach to the poor and rural areas (Ngethe et al, 2004). Interviews with some CSOs indicate an improvement in networking and the forming of alliances, as they claim to link with grassroots communities mostly through intermediary organizations such as community-based and faith-based organizations or people of influence within the communities, and at times make an effort to access the communities directly.

However, it became evident during discussions at a workshop with the CSOs in Nairobi that these are mainly loose networks that do not link strongly to the grassroots level. Informants from Kenya observe that links between local CSOs and grassroots actors are stronger than their links with national CSOs. The preliminary conclusions of the 2014 political economy analysis of civil society in Kenya[24] shows that the tendency by 'big' CSOs (national and international CSOs) to present themselves as the ones driving the agenda, has undermined effective collaboration.

Civic engagement is difficult as citizens seem to engage more in PILA for activities that they feel relate directly with their socio-economic needs, for example relating to land rights, deforestation, urbanization, education or insecurity. Because of poverty, communities listen more to anyone who promises to address their immediate needs such as water, healthcare, education, food and shelter, but do not link the provision of these services to policies in the respective sectors.

In Mozambique, a similar trend is visible. The country study report states that CSO involvement in policy-making processes has been limited to a small group of well-established, urban-based, professionalized organizations managed by middle-class professionals. These can speak the 'donor language' and are part of influential formal and informal networks that include academics, government officials, and professionals working for multilateral and bilateral organizations. Many of these PILA CSOs are connected to a second group of urban-based organizations, whose main focus is service delivery. Although they may take part in policy dialogue spaces, their actual contribution is marginal. In fact, their 'dialogue' with the government usually takes place with the main purpose of informing and coordinating the implementation of service delivery activities. In addition, urban-based CSOs work with

[24] A study on the political and economic situation in Kenya was commissioned by DANIDA. A preliminary report was shared with the research team, but it is not publicly available (yet).

small community-based organizations and other local groups. These collaborations are linked to the service-delivery component of the urban-based organizations' work and have been focused, to a large extent, on raising awareness and community sensitization and mobilization on various issues.

However, an 'invisible' majority of the Mozambican population does not feel represented in any of the mainstream policy spaces (neither invited nor claimed). This includes self-help groups active at community level as well as non-institutionalized protestors, such as the citizen groups involved in recent food riots (ITAD & COWI 2012).[25]

The weak connection between CSOs and their constituency in Kenya and Mozambique is not unique. As we discussed in chapter 7, there are many examples of problematic relationships between CSOs and the constituencies for which they claim to work.

8.1.5 To maintain direction and coherence

The fifth and last capability means that CSOs are able to maintain their sense of direction and the coherence of their actions under duress.

CSOs in both Kenya and Mozambique are not able to ensure coherence between their ambition, vision and PILA strategy. Due to the lack of a clear Theory of Change and strategy for PILA engagement, CSOs are not equipped to maintain flexible objectives without losing sight of long-term goals. Furthermore, it is not entirely clear whether the selected CSOs are able to recognize the limitations to their sphere of influence and set realistic goals. IOB did not find any evidence for the selected CSOs working with a set of organizational principles or operational guidelines.

CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique mainly reacted on incidences happening in the political or socio-economic field. They let these incidences dictate their PILA directions, meaning they often go all over the place, in terms of issues, strategies and activities. CSOs are generally unable to proactively steer policy processes and there is no clear coherence in their approach.

An important factor partly explaining this trend is the restricted environment that CSOs face when working on PILA aimed at inclusive development in Kenya and Mozambique. CSOs perceive their operating space to be severely limited and they believe that possibilities for influencing policy are thus restricted, in terms of access, but also because of risks to their organizational and even personal security. This perception of limited maneuvering space, regardless whether it is 'factual' or informed by self-censorship, drastically hampers the ability to ensure coherence.

[25] Some argue that the riots in Maputo were triggered by a sentiment of exclusion from dialogue from people who did not feel represented and/or did not know where to voice their concerns. A study conducted by IESE & IDS (2004) on the motivations and the political responses to the 'hunger revolts and citizen strikes' reveals the dialectic relation between policy change and the protests. The protests were largely triggered by announcements of increased prices of food products and prompted particular political (including policy) responses. The responses went from confrontation (disqualifying the protests, use of violent police repression, attempts to control the use of mobile phone) to accommodation through price freezes and subsidies and announcing new policies.

8.2 Cooperation on equal basis in networks and coalitions is problematic

The sections below discuss the importance of developing and maintaining specific PILA capabilities, how PILA networks function in Kenya and Mozambique and which challenges they face, and the necessity of North-South collaboration, including issues of equality in relationships and relevance of activities. All in all, coalitions and networks are not a miracle cure, although they can increase PILA effectiveness (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

8.2.1 Coalitions and networks can improve PILA effectiveness, but are no cure-all

Networks, alliances and coalitions are particularly important when working on PILA. This goes for international as well as local networks. CSOs at the national level in the target country need to link up with international actors (NGDOs) as well as local civil society actors (CBOs and FBOs). CSOs recognize that networks provide a collective voice and influence, which they believe makes them more credible when engaging in policy issues (ITAD & COWI, 2012). Networks and coalitions can thus play an important role in influencing policy processes, as they create more leverage. Furthermore, CSOs can share knowledge and do not have to bear risks alone. However, considerable time and effort is required to make these alliances work sustainably over the long term. Therefore, less formal networking arrangements may sometimes be more effective (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

Specific capabilities are needed in networks working on PILA to be successful. Some pointers for assessing the capacity of coalitions are:

- leadership is shared rather than positional;
- members act to satisfy the interests of all members;
- there is transparency, data is freely shared and explained;
- members deal with their diversity and power asymmetries;
- there is reflection on existing networks, cooperation if needed;
- structure and process are result-driven;
- respect and trust are present, avoiding stereotyping;
- credit and responsibility for the collaboration is shared; and
- views of less powerful stakeholders are given a voice.

It can be an extremely effective strategy to bring together a range of CSO actors that are not necessarily like-minded but still committed to a common cause (albeit form different perspectives), particularly where there is limited political will or vested interests resisting change (ITAD & COWI, 2012). However, diversity can also imply a greater chance of internal disagreement and a less united stance (see for example IEG, 2008 and Oxfam GB, 2013a). It is thus important to approach the membership base strategically: what would most benefit the coalition goals? Does this mean convening like-minded actors, or engaging opposition? Does it mean including or excluding the target of the coalition's PILA efforts?

8.2.2 Networks and coalitions in Kenya and Mozambique

CSO platforms and networks in Kenya and Mozambique experience five important challenges: (1) a tendency to adopt a catch-all approach instead of drawing on the areas of expertise of its members; (2) weak communication and information exchange between its members; (3) a lack of trust among CSOs; (4) a tendency of platforms becoming 'NGDOs of NGDOs' and of developing vertical instead of horizontal relations; and (5) poor representation of peripheral voices and less influential groups.

In Kenya, building collations between CSOs and making connections to citizens at the grassroots level have proven to be difficult for CSOs due to a lack of trust stemming from ethnic tensions and a lack of a national identity. Kenya has numerous CSO coalitions and networks, but they tend to break up after period of time. CSOs recognize this as a constraint for their work but it seems that other incentives are stronger. There is strong competition among Kenyan CSOs for donor funding and access to policymakers and CSOs are therefore reluctant to trust each other with PILA strategies and messages – they all want to claim individual success.

Kenyan CSOs operating at the national level claim to network with grassroots organizations, including community leadership structures such as the office of the sub-chiefs and village elders, in order to engage communities in PILA activities and then scale up to the national level. CSOs based in Nairobi and working at the national level try to establish networks with grassroots organizations, which provide entry points to the community and to strengthen their participation in national matters of policy change. Through these networks, community needs are supposed to be documented and transferred to national forums to influence strategies and policy discussions by various policymakers. However, as mentioned in section 8.1, although efforts are made, networks still tend to be loosely structured without strong links to the grassroots level.

CSO coalitions in Mozambique are relatively weak and have emerged only recently. The country study found that CSO platforms and thematic networks are an essential mechanism for dialogue with the government, since the latter has a preference for interacting with groups rather than individual CSOs. For many years, the government has used the division and lack of consensus among CSOs to delegitimize the claims made by individual CSOs, arguing that they represented minority voices.

While CSOs value alliance building through participation in platforms, networks and coalitions, there is a considerable level of suspicion and a fear of infiltration amongst them, which goes back to the liberation war. In the past, the reasons for establishing networks and platforms were associated with attempts to improve their legitimacy and coordination. Currently, however, joint action and protection against individual backlash are emphasized. CSOs addressing socio-culturally sensitive issues, such as sexual minorities' rights, also adopted affiliation to platforms and networks as a strategy to mobilize support from within civil society. CSOs platforms and networks are also perceived as an effective way of capitalizing the strengths of different CSOs and of providing space and visibility for smaller CBOs in policy-making processes. This approach is seen as vital in ensuring long-term outcomes (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

There are questions regarding the effectiveness of CSO platforms in Mozambique that concern the weak communication and information exchange between members. Furthermore, there is a tendency for some platforms to become 'NGDOs of NGDOs' based on vertical relations and communications instead of horizontality. The director ends up losing the vision about development of civil society, manages the forum as an NGDO and conflicts of interests emerge as the coalition begins to implement projects in competition with member organizations. In many cases the outcome is marginalization of collective interests, competition over resources, and loss of legitimacy. Nevertheless, there are also examples indicating that Mozambican CSOs are gradually showing their ability to mobilize around a common issue, work collaboratively and develop consensus on the matters they aim to influence, drawing on the creativity and niche of individual CSOs, through the formation and consolidation of thematic civil society networks with a clear purpose of influencing policies.

8.2.3 North-South collaboration is indispensable but not always relevant for Southern partners

Networks that encompass Northern and Southern civil society actors are indispensable for effective PILA. The strength of this complementary approach is that members divide tasks and therefore have a larger variety of interventions at their disposal to influence policy (Fair, Green & Global alliance, 2014). For Northern NGDOs it is especially important to involve Southern partners in PILA, as it gives more credibility and legitimacy. According to Oxfam (Cugelman & Otero, 2010), it is not always appropriate for a foreign actor to put certain issues on the table, especially when it comes to sensitive topics like SRHR (see for example IWHC, 2014 and Guttmacher Institute, 2013). Southern CSOs value Northern CSOs' capacity development support, international networking, access to specific technical competencies, and the long-term stability that durable partnerships bring (INTRAC, 2013).

However, it is important to pay attention to the power relations at play. Although working together has the potential to be a win-win situation, there is often no equality in the working relationship. Many partnerships are extractive, or at least are perceived as such (O'Callaghan & Gilbride, 2008). Any mention of how Southern CSOs and their constituents see Northern advocacy and the role of Northern NGDOs is missing from many discussions about Northern NGDOs' advocacy and its legitimacy (Hudson, 2000). Nevertheless, according to Hudson (2000), CSOs should not give up on the goal of genuine partnerships, which are characterized by jointly agreed purposes and values, mutual trust, respect and equality, frequent consultation, reciprocal accountability and transparency, sensitivity to political, economic and cultural contexts, and long-term commitments.

Findings from the ILA (MFS II) evaluation confirm some of the concerns expressed above, as the Alliances varied strongly in the extent to which they built on or involved Southern partners.[26] They did not always pay sufficient attention to developing and maintaining a commitment to shared objectives, the identification of common interests and the

[26] The following section draws on the *'MFS II Joint Evaluation of International Lobbying and Advocacy: Endline report'* (Arensman et al., 2015) that was executed by the Wageningen University and Research Centre (see Annex 8).

co-creation of activities. This led to a lack of shared ownership, commitment and coordination.

The evaluation reveals problems in terms of ownership, legitimacy and sustainability. Some of the outcomes that were achieved may have been relevant in light of the Alliances' Theories of Change, but less so in view of the needs of the partners in the South and their constituencies. Achieved policy changes, especially at the multilateral level, are often far removed from local realities and implementation. Another reason why the relevance of outcomes for local realities may not be clear is that it takes a long time for policy changes at international level to have an effect at local level.

The relationship between the Together for Change (T4C) Alliance and the Africa Child Policy Forum (ACPF) was predominantly a financial one; the ILA program operated by ACPF is virtually independent from the T4C Alliance. In the period after the kick-off of MFS II, when ILA work was progressing, there was less attention from the Dutch lead organization (ICS). The intense cooperation at the beginning of MFS II seems to have transformed into a more distanced relationship. Formal sharing of information mainly focused on the flow of funds and ACPF's progress reporting. Joint reflection on issues at stake for learning purposes did not transpire as an institutionalized form of cooperation. There was some exchange between individual staff members, but this appeared to be person-related and indicental rather than firmly embedded in organizational practices. This may explain the limited scope for mutual accountability, for cross-pollination and for learning between the programs of ICS and ACPF. After all, these programs were designed to be complementary under MFS II.

An important explanation seems to be that APCF's organizational ILA world is part of and adjusted to the African (Union) context and not necessarily consistent with the Western donor world and its paradigms and vocabulary, despite its funding sources. Nevertheless, the relation between ICS and ACPF is not conceived as a traditional donor-recipient relation in that ICS gives institutional funding and indeed provides full space to ACPF to fulfill their mission and implement the ILA program independently. As such, it offers ample space for rich interfacing between autonomous entities.

9

How do restrictive environments affect PILA effectiveness?

Summary

The context in which CSOs operate is one of the major factors explaining PILA effectiveness as it determines the conditions in which CSO PILA takes place and therefore the possibilities for success or failure. The capacity of CSOs to deal with these contextual factors is another ingredient determining effectiveness.

Civil society's agency is not uncontested and it is continually threatened. The enabling environment for civil society, which consists of the freedom of expression and the freedom to associate and assemble, is under pressure in many countries. In certain countries the environment is so restrictive that CSOs fear for their existence and staff members for their life. There is a serious problem in countries were governments considerably limit the operational space for CSOs. PILA is very much needed to open up this space in order to achieve inclusive, just and sustainable development, while at the same time the possibilities for engagement are seriously constrained.

CSOs continue their PILA despite the opposition they face. However, they have to go about it carefully and strategically. Cooperative strategies are the only feasible approach under such circumstances. Aspects that are particularly important for effective PILA in restrictive environments are: (1) civic engagement, because building a strong support base is key; (2) national networks; and (3) international contacts, including contacts with donors. But building trust among CSOs, and between CSOs and for example trade unions and faith-based organizations, is hard.

Donors play a modest role in improving restrictive contexts, but sometimes they can be important, for example by providing political backing or intervention in individual cases. Unfortunately, donors are often very cautious in challenging diminishing freedoms and the lack of political space to support CS engagement.

The two country studies in Kenya and Mozambique illustrate that CSOs and donors have insufficiently integrated their knowledge of the local political and economic situation in their PILA. In practice, solid political economy analyses (PEAs) are often missing or dated. A better understanding is needed to answer basic questions about the likely prospects and mechanisms for change.

Reader's guide
Section 9.1 discusses the trend of increasingly restrictive environments for civil society in many countries and illustrates how this hampered CSOs' PILA engagement in several cases.

Section 9.2 points out a structural underestimation of the impact of the political and economic situation on PILA, by CSOs as well as donors, which poses risks for effective influencing.

9.1 Increasingly restrictive environments for civil society hamper CSOs' PILA engagement

Many authors report that the foundation of an enabling environment for civil society engagement, which consists of the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, is under pressure in many countries (Poskitt, 2011; Trócaire, 2012; CIVICUS, 2013a; ACT Alliance, 2011). This means that civil society cannot optimally function and fulfill its important roles for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. Shrinking or restrictive space for civil society organizations is often associated with authoritarian governments (Calingaert, 2013). However, sometimes CSOs also have difficulties fulfilling their mandate in democratic countries, such as India or Brazil (ACT Alliance, 2011).

The CIVICUS State of Civil Society report 2013 convincingly illustrates how the space for civil society is curbed by governments and elites and faces threats from big enterprises. Russia was perhaps the most prominent example among the countries that restricted funding for CSOs in 2012, but Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nicaragua and Pakistan were also considering or had already adopted foreign funding restrictions. When we look at this trend, it appears that Egypt, Ethiopia and Russia spurred a 'contagion effect' (CIVICUS, 2013a; see also Bruch et al., 2013).

Attempts to limit the foreign funding to CSOs have become a tactic for governments that seek to silence CS critics. These attempts particularly affect CSOs with a focus on human rights, which rely heavily on foreign funding. In addition to funding constraints, a wide range of governments continues to impose measures restricting the ability of individuals to dissent, demonstrate, and exercise their freedoms of assembly and expression. Several countries also introduced laws that prohibit certain types of online content or seek to impede bloggers and other internet users. Such measures stifle the right of individuals and CSOs to receive and provide information and to exchange ideas with civil society counterparts inside and outside their home countries. They thus infringe upon the right to freedom of expression (CIVICUS, 2013a).

Governments have used several arguments to rationalize restrictions on the operating space for civil society organizations (Poskitt, 2011; Trócaire, 2012; WMD, 2012). Anti-terrorism laws, for example, are used to limit international financial support to CSOs. Furthermore, CSOs are perceived, or framed, as being part of the opposition or rebel movements, and their operations are restricted for the sake of stability. Another argument for regulations is the need to enhance accountability and transparency in CSOs, to counter corruption and ensure results. Furthermore,

motivations regarding harmonization of CSO activities with government plans and coordination of development activities are frequently used to influence the type of activities CSOs can execute. Perhaps the most common argument restricting foreign funding is the breach of sovereignty this interference in domestic affairs constitutes, which corresponds with the argument of a 'perceived lack of legitimacy with the local population' (Trócaire, 2012). These considerations do have some legitimate grounds to them, but they are generally put forward by governments wishing to (de)limit a critical voice. Charitable organizations and CSOs that deliver vital services, which governments may be unable to provide, are rarely challenged. According to CIVICUS (2014), 'when CSOs are vocal in opposing government policies, accusations of being partisan or being tools of vested interests and foreign governments tend to fly thick and fast'.

The cases described below illustrate some of these trends.

The ACT Alliance and CIDSE report (2014) describes how the large majority of CSO leaders in Colombia and Zimbabwe work in conditions in which they sometimes or frequently feel unsafe. Whereas in Zimbabwe the state is often the perceived perpetrator, in Colombia the threat may pertain to state forces, demobilized paramilitary groups or armed opposition groups (Act Alliance & CIDSE, 2014).

It is often the *perception* of a security threat that can determine the boundaries within which CSOs feel comfortable to operate. These perceptions do not necessarily align with the legal framework that is available; there may be some 'self-censorship' in CSO operations. The report by ACT Alliance and CIDSE (2014) describes this phenomenon for Malawi, where past events determine the perception of operating space for many CSOs. This finding is similar for Mozambique, where the historical background has a delimiting effect on CSOs' perceptions of what is possible with regards to PILA, especially when it comes to more sensitive issues or more confrontational strategies.

Ethiopia is a country with an environment for civil society that is generally classified as very restrictive.[27] Freedom of expression, association and assembly, a strong opposition and an independent judiciary are imperative for meaningful PILA activities, but these are in a state of infringement in the current Ethiopian situation. Thus, openly and freely engaging in PILA in an institutional setting is very difficult in the current socio-political context, especially for CSOs that are defined as Ethiopian Resident Charities and Societies by the Charities and Societies Proclamation (CSP). The restriction that CSOs receiving more than ten percent of funding from foreign sources are not to participate in any human rights and advocacy activities 'may effectively silence civil society in Ethiopia' (ICNL, 2014a). Consequently, the government becomes the sole 'agent' and in control of policy development in the public and private sector and this affects the '... aim of combating the structural causes of poverty and injustice and contributing to sustainable inclusive development' (Article 19, 2003). Box 3 illustrates the restrictive environment in Ethiopia for journalists.

[27] Ethiopia scores 0.36 on the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index (EEI) (2013b), belonging to the bottom 10, just bypassing countries like Zimbabwe, Guinea, Burundi and Iran. Specifically on the governance indicator Ethiopia scores very low (0.25), similar to countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo and Vietnam.

Box 3 *Media freedom in Ethiopia – risky business*

The Mass Media and Freedom of Information Proclamation imposes heavy restrictions and burden on journalists. According to a recent report of Human Rights Watch (HRW), restrictions and prosecution by the government has forced journalists and activists to flee, with sixty journalists forced into exile since 2010, and nineteen being imprisoned for exercising their right to free expression. Charges that journalists, publishers and human rights activists as well as opposition leaders face include 'inciting violence and disseminating information against the constitution' or 'stirring up protests'. HRW indicates that Ethiopia has the highest number of journalists in exile of any country in the world other than Iran.

Source: Human Rights Watch (2015).

These restrictions in general and prohibitions on external resources in particular have forced many Ethiopian CSOs to close or abandon activities, since they could not raise sufficient funds locally (ICNL, 2014a). Many of the CSOs that were involved in advocacy activities had to change their approach, focusing less, or at least less explicitly, on PILA and more on service delivery for example, in order to keep generating financial resources from donors outside the country (Denu & Zewdie, 2013).

However, even in countries that are generally perceived as having a more open environment for civil society, CSOs may feel confined in their operating space. As was described in section 7.2, in Mozambique[28], too, the gap between a relatively progressive legal and policy framework, the practice of public institutions (characterized by a lack of implementation) and people's living conditions is deepening.

In Kenya[29], CSOs feel the political environment is increasingly restrictive, although officially there are no legal barriers for CSOs to speak out or engage in advocacy efforts on any issues of public importance (see also section 7,1). The Kenyan Public Benefit Organization (PBO) Act (sections 66 and 67) provides that PBOs may engage freely in research, education, publication, public policy and advocacy. Moreover, in general, Kenyan law provides a conducive framework for CSOs to seek and secure funding. There are no special rules relating to the receipt of foreign funds by CSOs (ICNL, 2014b). After extensive protest in Kenya and international criticism, the Kenyan Government blocked the proposed amendment to the Kenyan Public Benefit Organization Act of 2012, which would have imposed restrictions comparable to the Ethiopian proclamation (Act Alliance & CIDSE, 2014).

[28] Mozambique scores 0.43 on the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index (EEI) (2013b), similar to countries like Kenya, Senegal, Venezuela and Azerbaijan. However, in the EEI, Mozambique is in the list of the 10 worst socio-economic environments for civil society (scoring 0.31 with Benin and Tanzania).

[29] Kenya scores 0.43 on the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index (EEI) (2013b), similar to countries like Mozambique, Senegal, Venezuela and Azerbaijan.

A report by CIVICUS and the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) about attacks on civil society in Kenya highlights that government officials accuse CSOs working on politically sensitive issues of acting for foreign parties. The report reveals acts of self-censorship by CSOs with regard to criticism directed at the government officials for fear of bureaucratic reprisals such as arbitrary cancellation of their registration or freezing of their bank accounts.

9.2 Underestimation of the impact of political and economic situation on PILA poses risks

The political and socio-economic environment varies from country to country and is shaped by earlier historical events. Country contexts provide the backdrop and starting point for designing development interventions and also for assessing CSO effectiveness in PILA engagement (ITAD & COWI, 2012). It is extremely important to understand these contexts and how public authority and collective goods required for development emerge and are distributed through domestic political processes and contestation between different interest groups. This can be seen as a process of bargaining between state and civil society actors and through the interaction of formal and informal institutions (IDS, 2010). Getting a grip on the political and economic context in the target country is necessary to formulate answers to basic questions about why things are as they are and what the likely prospects and mechanisms for change are (Bossuyt et al., 2009). Political economy analysis (PEA) can help determine what the likely prospects and mechanisms for policy change are, based on existing political and economic structures, involved actors and incentives (Bossuyt, 2014). PEA seeks to look behind the façade of formal commitments and institutions to understand where change comes from, which actors push for change or block it, what their interests are and which power relations exist between stakeholders (Bossuyt, 2014).

Especially among the CSOs in the field there is a need to understand the arenas they move around in. Moreover, it is important for development agents such as donors and Northern NGDOs to carefully think about their *own* position in this force field of stakeholders and interests, and to identify possible allies, opponents, opportunities and risks to their envisaged intervention.

However, despite all the advantages, donors may have some adversity to PEA. According to Carothers and De Gramont (2013), the aid sector struggles to integrate the political dimension in their interventions. Especially donors are reluctant of the risks involved. A PEA confronts donor agencies with their own position in the arena of stakeholders and (conflicting) interests, and their own (domestic) political socio-economic and perhaps cultural motives and incentives for providing support. PEA can also bring forth dilemmas of cooperation; it prevents continuation with traditional aid and holds up a mirror to development agents, and the reflection can be unsettling and disturbing (Bossuyt, 2014).

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) stresses the importance of PEA as a tool for gaining better understanding, to make sure that support

strategies are built on a solid understanding of societal dynamics, governance processes and prospects for improved accountability, and that they are realistically designed and implemented (Bossuyt et al., 2009). The paper adds that as development partner agencies adopt a more political approach to promoting domestic accountability, they enter into troubled waters and many of their earlier assumptions may no longer be valid.

The two country studies in Kenya and Mozambique illustrate that CSOs and donors have insufficiently integrated their knowledge of the (local) political and economic situation in their PILA. In practice, solid political economy analyses are often missing or outdated. These findings are no exception: often there is insufficient careful analysis of the power relations, the operating environment and the potential for alliances in the way CSOs design campaigns and approach engagement (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

An aspect closely related to this omission, is that the CSOs lack an overall PILA strategy. In Mozambique for example, CSOs recognize the need for a better understanding of the context in which they operate and the fact that they have not been able to steer the processes they want to influence. CSOs have pointed out the importance of conducting political economy analysis to understand how the institutions and the system work and then decide how to act. They also highlighted the need of a better understanding of emerging interest groups and the links between formal and informal politics, as well as the power relations and struggles.

In Kenya, politics have had a strong influence on PILA processes. Legislation and socio-economic factors have changed with changing political systems, and accordingly space and capacity to practice PILA varied. CSOs analyze the external context in which they operate and claim to devise PILA strategies based on this analysis and in line with the changing context. However, as monitoring and evaluation at an organizational level is not well established and there is hardly a culture of internal reflection and learning, it remains unclear how they do this systematically.

The political economy analysis and an organization's Theory of Change for PILA are closely connected, as the contextual analysis informs the strategic approach, by providing solid understanding of societal dynamics, governance processes and prospects for policy influencing. Also, PEA serves to reflect regularly on the assumptions behind the chosen approach and on whether they are still valid.

As the political, economic and socio-cultural context has such a large impact on the possibilities for engaging in PILA, there is no universal recipe that works for all countries (or even local regions), sectors and time frames. Distinct institutional, economic, social and cultural factors are likely to determine which initiatives are more successful than others. Good practices are often context-specific and do not lend themselves easily to generalization.

An analysis of the political economy in a certain country context is not a goal in itself and should definitely not be used as a tick-the-box exercise, but should be thorough and form an integral part of an organization's Theory of Change.

The large impact of the political and economic situation on the possibilities for engaging in PILA calls for more attention to local rooting of the ToC for PILA. Strong dependence of effective PILA on the context in which it takes place implies that the right level of analysis for devising a ToC should thus at least lie at the country level, but perhaps the local/regional level would be even more suitable.

Donors thus have to be extremely careful to leave enough room to national CSOs and local partners to design their own ToC, and should not limit their possibilities by predetermined choices. The impact of the political and economic situation confirms the importance of local leadership and locally legitimate CSOs and coalitions in bringing about change.

10

How do aspects of capacity affect PILA success or failure?

Summary

A good Theory of Change (ToC) and a sound, flexible PILA strategy that is appropriate to the context in which CSOs operate are two key elements of capacity that influence levels of PILA effectiveness.

From the thematic and country case studies IOB learned that developing capacity for PILA is an evolutionary process, founded on the particular CSO's work and experiences. Tacit knowledge, the informal knowledge about how and why things work, is an essential part of this. Regular reflection based on a ToC helps to systematize this knowledge and make it available for broader application.

The formulation of a ToC is new to most CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique and their donors. CSOs' strategic plans present their missions and strategic objectives, but the pathways to achieving change and underlying assumptions are hardly made explicit. This is unfortunate, because the findings from the CSR cases show that most effective PILA is observable in cases where the ToC is specific with regard to demands, targeting, mechanisms and assumptions. A ToC matures through experience and is colored by the context. This requires a willingness to learn, as well as the space to act on lessons learned and adjust policies and strategies if necessary.

An important pitfall is formed by implicit and/or flawed assumptions underlying the ToC. For example, the idea that change is only a top-down process does not apply; ownership at the grassroots level has to be present, in order to ensure implementation, to hold government to account for promises made and thus for (policy) change to endure.

IOB found that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' textbook strategy that leads to PILA success at all levels, every time and everywhere. Policy influencing, as mentioned before, is heavily dependent on the political, socio-economic and cultural context in which the envisaged change is supposed to take place. Therefore, CSOs need to think hard about the change they want to achieve and the most suitable strategies to do so. This often requires combining strategies and readjusting the chosen approach.

In order to effectively influence policy, CSOs need to have different strategies and a range of tactics at their disposal. The findings show that CSOs use and combine different PILA strategies, but hardly in a strategic manner.

Reader's guide
Section 10.1 shows that a sound Theory of Change (ToC) ensures a cohesive and locally grounded PILA approach. However, in practice this proves to be problematic for two reasons. First of all, explicit ToCs are generally lacking, which leads to scattered activities. Secondly, ToCs do not sufficiently address specific PILA characteristics.

Section 10.2 points out that CSOs need a range of PILA strategies and tactics to be effective. Most CSOs show a preference for inside-track strategies and outside-track strategies are less popular; especially activism is perceived as risky. Nevertheless, the final part of this section describes how CSOs need a range of tactics, as a combination of strategies is most effective.

10.1 A sound Theory of Change ensures a cohesive and locally grounded PILA approach

All in all, although the Theory of Change as a conceptual framework is accepted in development theory and policy, its use in practice seems to be lagging behind. There is consensus that a good ToC takes the context into account, makes assumptions explicit and leaves room for flexibility. However, there are enormous differences in the quality of ToC's and their usage, as seen in the grant applications for the new strategic partnerships, in the CSR study and in the studies in Mozambique and Kenya. Especially with local organizations in Mozambique and Kenya, understanding of the ToC concept and the organizations' specific design and practical use in programs is not well developed.

This poses a challenge in working with local partners, especially if the intention is to do so more on the basis of equality instead of a traditional donor-recipient relation, as the requirement of making and using a ToC may mean that local ownership is low. There is a danger of local CSOs slipping back into the mere implementation role instead of being co-creators of a program. IOB cannot stress the importance of the local rooting of a ToC enough. There is a danger that donors – governments as well as Northern NGDOs – influence the design and content of the ToC too much, thereby overshadowing the local vision and context.

10.1.1 A Theory of Change explicates change processes

In general evaluation literature (see for example Astbury & Leeuw, 2010; IOB, 2015[30]), the concept of a 'Theory of Change' (ToC) is used to structure an organization's approach to development: what development is, how it can be achieved and what the role of the organization (or the program) is therein (vis-á-vis other actors). A ToC should describe the change processes that are supposed to lead to a desired result. It analyses the broader context, including the culture and existing power relations, before it places the demarcated intervention in that context. Assumptions about behavior, the underlying mechanisms at work and the context that supports the intervention are made explicit and are supported by evidence as much as possible (IOB, 2015).

30 From an internal policy document of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015.

By making assumptions underlying policy and interventions explicit, the learning ability is strengthened. Why do we do what we do, are we still doing the rights things and why does achieved output not always lead to the expected result? (BIS, 2015).[31] Why do we expect that results will lead to the desired change in development? By reflecting on these kinds of issues, policy and programs can be adjusted and improved.

Within the department for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry, it is common to work based on planning and agreements, which are based on predetermined fixed goals (through log-frames and result chains). However, adapting policy and programs to a changing context or lessons learned about mechanisms and underlying assumptions requires regular strategic reflection and some degree of flexibility in the planning and financing of programs. The Ministry will have to allow enough room to partner organizations and implementing agents to do this (BIS, 2015).

All in all, a Theory of Change focuses on explicating change processes that lead to a desired end result and it is therefore particularly suitable for working in a changing context, as is the case in PILA.

10.1.2 Explicit Theories of Change are lacking in practice, which leads to scattered activities

Although in general Theory of Change is a relatively new concept that development agents are still coming to grips with, for organizations working on PILA this seems to be even more difficult. In theory, a ToC would be especially suited for PILA-type interventions as it is able to accommodate flexibility, a multitude of players and a certain level of unpredictability (more than a log frame for example).

A ToC matures through experience; it starts with a vision and idea(l), but only through experience is it colored by reality. A good ToC therefore has to follow a path to develop. The question is then, whether it is possible to take big steps, in order not to lag behind. Learning from other organizations' experiences makes it possible to skip part of this experience process.

Evaluation literature generally shows that PILA strategies and activities are hardly based on explicit ToCs and are often haphazard; they mostly consist of scattered activities that do not seem to lie on a plausible critical path towards significant policy advances (ITAD & COWI, 2012). From the Mozambique country report it becomes clear that the formulation of a ToC is something new for most CSOs. This is illustrated by the fact that CSOs that do have a ToC outlined did so in the context of their current strategic plans. Similarly, a ToC is a new concept for all the CSOs that have participated in the Kenya country study. In their strategic plans, CSOs generally formulate strategic objectives and a mission and vision, and it is common that PILA is reflected in one or two of the strategic objectives, but the pathways to achieve change are not explicitly described.

31 From an internal policy document of the Office for International Cooperation (BIS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015.

Often, underlying assumptions are hardly made explicit. This can be problematic, because aiming for certain outcomes and impact requires a very thorough analysis of actors and the spheres of influence needed to achieve the desired change. A ToC can be a useful instrument because it helps translate the analysis of the problem's complexity in the question of what to do, whom to approach, and in what way (Grotenhuis, 2014).

Furthermore, if a ToC is lacking or inadequate this not only poses problems for the planning and implementation phase of an intervention, but it also complicates monitoring and evaluation. An inadequate ToC can contribute to weaknesses in programming and in CSOs' ability to monitor and measure the wider impact of interventions. This, in turn, can make it more difficult to assess the impact on broader development outcomes (INTRAC, 2013). Moreover, a part of the role of a ToC in a M&E system is to continuously reflect on and 'test' that ToC; are we still on the right track?

The CSR sub-study (Fransen & De Winter, 2015) found that ToCs matter as an analytical category assembling a CSO's strategy, demands, perspective on the political-economic environment and ability to reflect on what works and why. Based on findings from the cases, one can see that less specific and less elaborate ToCs, for instance in terms of the specificity of PILA demands and rationales for targeting companies, lead to less clear results, or make it harder to claim that PILA has been effective. While all CSOs analyzed in the sub-study may lay claim to some influence on companies and governments as a result of PILA, most effective PILA is observable in cases where the ToC, although not necessarily explicitly designed ex ante to the start of PILA activities, is most specific in its perspective on demands, targeting and mechanism (Fransen & De Winter, 2015).

Important to observe however, is that the ToCs are affected by the historical dynamic elaborated above: PILA experience leads to more specific and elaborate ToCs, through more knowledge about targets, political-economic environments and stronger partnerships (Fransen & De Winter, 2015). As a result, it does not mean that PILA can only be effective if ToCs are strong. This view would be insensitive to the observation that PILA activities always start off as a form of pioneer work, with all the happenstance events that occur and unintended consequences that follow. Less elaborate ToCs are not the explanation of this state of affairs; they are a function of it (Fransen & De Winter, 2015).

10.1.3 Theories of Change are not sufficiently addressing specific PILA characteristics

A good ToC needs to incorporate the characteristics of PILA work. First of all, the context has to be taken into account, including actors dominating the field (targets as well as other influencers), prevailing norms and practices, external effects, et cetera. Secondly, the elusive nature of changing policies and attitudes must be acknowledged, which requires flexibility, accommodating unpredictable events and designing ways of dealing with them (adjusting strategies and/or intermediate goals). Furthermore, the multitude and diversity of actors involved in PILA, either as direct targets, other influencers – with similar or completely opposite goals – or others affecting the envisaged change process indirectly, requires

awareness, specific strategies and realistic expectations with regard to the impact of the own intervention.

All this means that, most likely, ToCs for various PILA organizations and interventions differ considerably. Different CSOs have different views on how change occurs – when the right conditions are in place, when there are strong actors (coalitions) pushing for change, by working directly with decision-makers, or by collective community action (grassroots mobilization) (EAA, 2010). The vision about how change happens (which is based on assumptions) determines the approach to PILA. It may lead to advocacy efforts based on (a theory of) agenda-setting of certain issues (Coffman, 2010), to a focus on empowerment and accountability (ICAI, 2013), or to lobby and advocacy for policy implementation (Devlin-Foltz, 2012).

However, some common aspects can be identified regarding a ToC for PILA. Donors and NGDOs should realize that a good ToC for PILA has some specific characteristics. For example, there is a clear focus on strengthening the influence of CSOs, an integrated approach to capacity building and a mapping of (plausible) risks and mitigating measures. Furthermore, it should be coherent in the sense that the different steps needed to achieve the strategic goals are logical, there is a focus on the added value of partners and the MEL system is clear. It is also important that assumptions and the choices made are based on experience, expertise and knowledge of the context. And lastly, an analysis is made of the (political) forces potentially affecting the intervention, including interests and positions of different actors and their relations[32], and there is a clear vision on the roles of different partners, especially regarding the importance of local partners in agenda-setting and capacity building for example. Box 4 below illustrates common trends in ToCs from Mozambican CSOs.

Box 4 *Analysis of ToC's from ten CSOs in Mozambique*

What is evident from the interviews and the document review is the strong emphasis placed on improved public awareness and greater social mobilization. Citizen engagement in agenda-setting as well as in formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of policy, at community, district, provincial and national levels are perceived by CSOs as essential for change. Alliance building amongst CSO, monitoring the implementation of government policies and regional/international commitments and disseminating information about government's performance through various means are also considered essential to promote change.

Source: Mozambique country study report.

[32] This means that such an analysis should be made internally to inform choices and decisions regarding program design and implementation. It does not mean that CSOs have to release this information publicly, as in some countries it may be very dangerous to put such an accurate analysis on paper, especially in police states or states with strict libel laws.

An important pitfall is formed by implicit or flawed assumptions. For example, the assumption that change is a top-down process, in which change has to be achieved on top (politics and policy) to trickle down and impact in the lives of the poor, is a mechanical view that does not apply, even in well-organized societies (Grotenhuis, 2014). Some sort of ownership at the local (grassroots) level has to be present, in order to ensure implementation, to hold government to account for promises made and thus for (policy) change to endure. According to Grotenhuis (2014), against this background it might make sense not to adhere too strictly to the distinction between service delivery and PILA, and not to write service delivery off as a way to meaningful social change.

Furthermore, in PILA interventions, organizations often make assumptions about the role of local civil society based on their own perceptions and the status of civil society in most developed countries. This assumption may or may not be flawed (testing it is difficult), but nevertheless, when it is implicit or unconscious it may cause problems in the implementation phase – when civil society does not take up certain roles, or is perceived as not mandated to do so.

An example of an important assumption to take into account, regardless of the specific PILA intervention and strategy, is that building a constituency or support base in the target country, which supports the desired change, is crucial (Grotenhuis, 2014).

10.2 CSOs need a range of PILA strategies and tactics to be effective

IOB found that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' textbook strategy that leads to PILA success at all levels, every time and everywhere. Policy influencing, as mentioned before, is heavily dependent on the political, socio-economic and cultural context in which the envisaged change is supposed to take place. Therefore, CSOs need to think long and hard about the change they want to achieve, have to be clear about their demands, and must decide upon the strategies most suitable. For example, very different approaches are needed depending on whether the issues are a shared public good or evoke polarized positions, or appear to threaten government positions (ITAD & COWI, 2012). In order to be effective in achieving change through PILA, a clear vision and strategy is thus crucial.

Two main categories of strategies for policy influencing can be distinguished, namely 'inside-track', focused on cooperation and persuasion, and 'outside-track', focused on confrontation and pressure (see Figure 1). While at first it may seem that these two dimensions are antagonistic, in reality there is a dialectic relationship between the two. The strategies in the diagram thus should be seen as dynamic rather than static categories. Yet, distinguishing the two is useful to identify how different policy influencing interventions are informed.

Although this report emphasizes that strategies need to be assessed and weighed according to the context in which PILA takes place, IOB found that there is a general preference among

CSOs for working with policymakers through cooperative strategies such as advising and lobbying. Entering into dialogue, which requires a moderate position, is perceived as more effective than frustrating relations with a hostile, threatening approach, which is how CSOs often look upon more activist strategies. However, there are examples of CSOs that have managed to combine a moderate position and engagement based on mutual respect with a critical attitude and public campaigns.

Furthermore, the sensitivity of the PILA issue at stake determines the extent to which an approach can be effective. When the topic of PILA is not politically sensitive and there is a shared interest, it may be possible to achieve change without a clear strategy for action and haphazard, scattered activities. However, if the issue is more contentious, this will not work. In a similar fashion, public outreach may be very effective to create leverage on a topic where a stalemate was reached in invited space, but it can also be counterproductive if the public forms a block to oppose PILA goals. This is especially risky when it comes to sensitive issues in terms of socio-cultural norms and practices. It is thus important to think strategically about the best way to be effective and attain the desired change.

CSOs will have to use different PILA strategies, their effectiveness depending on the context. If cooperation with policymakers did not deliver the desired results and 'informal' forms of dialogue are not enough, CSOs may switch to more public campaigns and pressure aimed at generating public debate and support. According to the Fair, Green & Global alliance (2014), CSOs need to have a toolbox at their disposal to effectively influence policy, from which they can choose the right strategy and intervention for the specific context.

The findings from the case studies show that CSOs use and combine different PILA strategies, but hardly in a strategic manner. In theory, deciding on which strategies to use should follow from a CSO's political motivation to address poverty, injustice and inequality. The extent to which a CSO is committed in this way determines its position – for example the distance towards government and connections to constituencies – and its approach, from which specific options in terms of strategies flow. CSOs generally start with this last step, choosing strategies that seem to make sense; at best in the light of the context, at worst because of pragmatic reasons such as available funding or expectations of targets or donors. There is hardly any reflection on what it takes to use the different influencing strategies effectively, especially when it comes to politically sensitive and controversial issues.

An important aspect in the feasibility of PILA strategies is whether a CSO has the capacity to be an autonomous actor and have countervailing power. This can be derived from a strong support base and constituency. A trade union, for example, does not have to organize a strike daily, but the fact that they are able to do so determines their leverage for pursuing other strategies. This pressure ensures a seat and a voice at the negotiating table. A CSO has to be able to use cooperative as well as confrontational strategies in order to be effective in one or the other.

10.2.1 Inside-track strategies are preferred and viewed as most effective

Inside-track strategies of advising and lobbying are usually preferred, as they are deemed the most effective. Having close relationships with policymakers usually means easier access and a softer landing of ideas for policy changes. CSOs generally acknowledge that a moderate position makes it easier for policymakers to engage with them as a source of information and leaves room for dialogue. A hostile approach could lead to policymakers questioning CSOs in terms of popular mandate, intellectual legitimacy and support from Southern groups (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

The Mozambique country report indicates that CSOs, while adopting a myriad of strategies to influence policies, have privileged non-confrontational interaction (inside-track strategies). There is a shared perception that collaboration is the best approach to influence policies in the political context in Mozambique. CSOs highlight the importance of engaging in a cooperative manner and they have invested in advising and lobbying strategies, entailing for example participation in formal policy spaces through networks and platforms, the creation of new spaces and the use of informal networks to access information and influential individuals.

It may be more effective to pursue non-confrontational strategies, especially when an organization also works on service delivery financed by the government. However, there are risks involved in getting too close to the government. Lobbying and advising can become more technocratic than representational and it is questionable whether this can still be called PILA – in the sense of politically motivated action to address poverty and inequality. After all, whose interests are being represented, besides organizational survival of the specific CSO? Therefore, by focusing exclusively on cooperation with powerful actors, CSOs may lose their independence and be coopted or may be perceived as such. This negatively affects their legitimacy in the eyes of constituencies and the general public.

Advising and lobbying are strategies that are used often, but they are not always explicitly named as such. In Mozambique, these strategies have depended on the space provided by the government. On many occasions, CSOs have had to claim access to policy spaces and processes that were already underway without them or with certain preselected CSOs. They had to lobby to participate in policymaking and legislation drafting processes. While lobbying may be part of a planned process of engagement, the range of informal contact and encounters that occurs between government officials and CSO representatives on an unplanned basis is potentially an important contributor to policy engagement, although it generally goes unrecorded. The personal networks that are strong among the urban middle classes often facilitate lobbying. These networks provide the means for the more or less continuous and low-level exchange of ideas that occurs in the background of the more formal, and visible policy engagement processes (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

In Mozambique, lobbying depends on social capital, personal networks and the extent to which CSOs are able to tap into ‘champions of participation’ within state institutions that provide information about ongoing processes and facilitate access to key documents which improves the quality of CSO input.

An example of an organization with a clear focus on advising is the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), whose 'niche' is based on behind-the-scenes, confidential support to negotiators, based on personal relationships built over time (Shepard, 2006). This strategy limits the number of allies that are included in efforts and how much information can be shared. Nonetheless, it forms a significant aspect of IWHC's contribution to policy outcomes, although not always visible or inclusive (Shepard, 2006).

10.2.2 Outside-track strategies less popular, especially activism holds risks

While both advocacy and activism include public action, the Mozambique report shows that there is a difference (in perception); CSOs showed reluctance to resort to activities with an activist edge, but had fewer reservations in relation to public communications and education campaigns.

Arguably, CSOs' preference for certain strategies is related to the perceived targets of interventions. Marches and demonstrations are more visible and tend to be received as a direct 'attack' to state institutions, while public communications and campaigns to raise awareness are directed at the general public. CSOs highlight the importance of engaging the public while at the same time keeping the channels open for dialogue.

It is possible to combine outside-track strategies with an open position and dialogue. Oxfam for example, known for their public campaigns, generally take a moderate position, which makes it easier for policymakers to engage with them as a safe source of information (Cugelman & Otero, 2010). The evaluation report of Oxfam's MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY campaign notes that 'another downside of what was felt to be an overly negative, hostile approach was that policymakers could begin to question the mandate of some organizations in terms of popular mandate, intellectual legitimacy and support from Southern groups' (Martin et al., 2006). The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) has over the years shifted its position from antagonistic to more cooperative, and besides being a watchdog it advises others to continue the trend of dialogue and to be a reliable partner for companies that take labor standards seriously. Direct naming and shaming combined with anonymity generates resistance; it is better to only resort to negative publicity on specific companies after attempts were made to enter into dialogue (Dieleman, 2010).

In Mozambique, despite a preference for non-confrontational interaction, the use of advocacy interventions to exert pressure, including naming and shaming, has intensified significantly. Public opinion was mobilized through a combination of collaboration with the media as well as awareness raising events in the communities. Activism in the form of public demonstrations, petitions and the like is a visible and very familiar form of CS engagement where other forms of policy dialogue have stalled, failed or are impossible, or where civil society actors choose this strategy in order to force public and government attention (ITAD & COWI, 2012). In Mozambique, the recourse to peaceful marches to influence policy change has also increased and they are used in the context of broader advocacy campaigns. CSOs use peaceful marches to inform to the public about a given situation and to 'force' the public to influence state institutions. This strategy is not suitable for all issues, however, particularly if there is a risk of getting public opposition instead of

support. The use of social mobilization techniques is very important in order to raise enough support to create leverage. Interestingly, spontaneous demonstrations of course continue to include civil society, but they may not include CSOs, with social media playing an important role in mobilizing instant responses (ITAD & COWI, 2012). This is a trend IOB saw in Mozambique, where public dissatisfaction led to mass protests, but traditional CSOs were sidelined and only joined the movement at a later stage.

10.2.3 A combination of strategies is most effective: CSOs need a range of tactics

To effectively influence policy, CSOs need to have different strategies and a range of tactics at their disposal. Depending on the PILA goals, they need to pick clever, strategic and timely interventions (Fair, Green & Global alliance, 2014). CSOs can and should use different strategies depending on the context. When 'informal' forms of policy dialogue did not deliver the right results, CSOs may switch to more public campaigns and pressure. Resorting to outsider strategies and claimed space may be a deliberate choice for CSOs to retain control and avoid pitfalls of manipulation or co-option.[33] However, often PILA engagement is a process wherein CSOs begin with confrontational claimed space and move to building respect and trust with government which opens up opportunities for engagement in invited space, but go back to claimed space when it comes to controversial issues (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

In terms of sensitive topics, such as human rights, it is especially important to carefully consider the best strategy to move forward. For example, public outreach may serve to generate the popular support base needed to get a foot in the door of the policy arena, set the political agenda and 'enforce' policy change. However, if the issue is highly controversial, public campaigning might also lead to opposition, which would make PILA efforts even more challenging. In that case, behind-the-scenes advising or low-profile lobbying may be more effective, as it does not force the government to take a strong public stance.

Thus, in seeking to influence the enabling environment, CSOs need to identify not only the most important things they wish to influence, but also the places and moments where there is most opportunity to make a change. This analysis must be context-specific, linked to windows of opportunity, to the levels of work at which action is possible (agenda-setting, policy change or legislation, implementation) and to the capacity that is needed. It is also important that progressive civil society activists striving for positive social change in challenging environments work with respected social and political actors that are likely to influence others, in order to reach a tipping point at which broader society is more likely to embrace change (CIVICUS, 2011).

According to the Fair, Green & Global alliance (2014), knowing when to shift between a range of activities in a variety of areas, often with different partner organizations, is the most effective way of influencing policy – from public pressure and one-on-one talks with decision makers, to analyses and the right intervention at the right time. In their climate

[33] It is important to note that it may also be a deliberate choice for CSOs not to engage in PILA at all. CSOs may do this because of fear of risking government relations (and service delivery contracts). Some evaluations state that at a local level, where the priority concerns are with meeting basic needs and in directly addressing poverty issues, engaging in policy dialogue is not a high priority for many CSOs (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

change campaign, Oxfam GB aimed to increase political will by encouraging progressive forces and opposing, or winning over obstructive ones (Cugelman & Otero, 2010). Oxfam GB identified these actors through a power analysis and devised a campaign to move them by blending research, alliances, popular mobilization, international media work, and lobbying. In the Oxfam Rights in Crisis program (Oxfam GB, 2013b), facilitating access of local, in this case Afghan, civil society actors to international stakeholders was added to the mix. The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) chose to combine four strategies in their campaign for a 'living wage'. The CCC ensured media attention for research findings, lobbied to get the theme on the political agenda, stimulated consumers to be critical towards clothing brands and engaged companies directly in multi-stakeholder dialogue (Dieleman, 2010).

There are some underlying basic strategies that transcend the distinction between inside-track strategies and outside-track strategies, such as awareness raising and using evidence-based research to back up PILA work.

Awareness-raising interventions can be directed to different audiences, such as CSOs at grassroots levels; government officials and policymakers; politicians and parliamentarians; practitioners in the field, for example police, military or judges; and of course the general public (Oxfam GB, 2013a).

Evidence-based advocacy is a key 'entry point' strategy and it is emerging as one of the ways for CSOs to bring concrete influence to bear on government policy and practice (Act Alliance & CIDSE, 2014). There is a host of independent research and evidence on which to base sound advocacy strategies. Sometimes such research is sought by government agencies and politicians who do not themselves have the resources to conduct evaluations, or do not want them dismissed as politically biased. There is potential for significant value added through the strengthening of CSO capacity to systematically generate such information in order to raise their profile and build cases for policy change (ITAD & COWI, 2012).

In Mozambique, there are few independent research-oriented CSOs. Institutional links between academia and CSOs are nearly non-existent, although individual university researchers have been hired to conduct research on, with and for CSOs, usually on a consultancy basis. In Kenya, the opposite was found; there is a very strong focus on research, but this may even hinder the development of PILA activities aimed at achieving policy change. Research-based evidence is important, but in the end it should be used to substantiate claims and inform PILA interventions.

The Guttmacher Institute relies heavily on the function of evidence-based research to address the sensitive topics they are working, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). It fills major gaps in research evidence on abortion, packages scientific data to reach various important audiences and strategically disseminates scientific information to influence policies and programs (Guttmacher Institute, 2013). Oxfam GB has found that research is a useful tool for raising awareness, particularly when information is lacking, in order to counter prevailing attitudes and to underpin a strong advocacy position (O'Callaghan & Gilbride, 2008). Box 5 illustrates how the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) approaches research-based PILA.

Box 5 *Three-step strategy for research-based PILA*

Researchers seeking to influence policy need to pursue a three-part strategy. First, assemble and consolidate a strong research agenda by producing evidence-based policy advice. Second, implement a coherent plan of advocacy that brings the research and its value to decision-makers within the policy community. And third, energize popular interest in the issue and proposed policy approaches. All three parts of the strategy work together. Generating timely and policy relevant research advice, packaged in a form digestible by policymakers, is the essential first step. Effective advocacy serves to close the loop between information and decision. And public dissemination – especially among constituencies with direct interests in the issue, who may exercise their own influence on policymakers – helps transform official indifference into attentive deliberation and action.

Source: Carden (2009), International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

11

How does donor support affect PILA capacity development?

Summary

Donor support for PILA capacity attempts to bring the voices of people living in poverty and of other marginalized and vulnerable groups into the political process. However, many donors and their Northern development partners are hesitant to integrate political goals into their programs and handle 'democracy and governance' as a distinct sector. As a consequence, a large share of their aid hardly involves political aspects.

Donor support is more than just financial support; it also involves political and diplomatic support, access to and facilitation of networks, technical expertise and advice, et cetera. CSOs appreciate it when donors combine these types of support.

The complex nature of PILA poses extra challenges to donors, as it requires them to thoroughly understand the context in which they provide support. The findings in Kenya and Mozambique indicate that donors primarily fund their own priorities, often neglecting the agenda of the CSOs they support. The use of social media and mobile communications in citizen mobilization often bypasses established CSOs, presenting new challenges to donors, as these CSOs run the risk of becoming less relevant.

Furthermore, a shift towards greater attention to supporting the enabling environment for PILA engagement is necessary. However, legal provisions for participation do not necessarily work unless people feel able to claim the space and are helped to do so productively. Therefore, it is important to empower those directly affected by a policy to assume their own agency.

Endogenous capacity development is not easily pursued when a CSO's future depends on donor funding. Donor funding and associated dependencies involve asymmetries in the relationship, but measures can be taken to contain this dilemma. The role of Northern NGDOs, including the Dutch, is complex when it comes to capacity development of Southern partners. It is difficult to achieve equal relationships or real involvement from Southern partners because of Northern NGDOs' own programs and envisaged results. This puts local CSOs' ownership at stake.

The CSOs in Kenya and Mozambique appreciate the direct funding they received from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN). The Dutch embassies' flexibility, the fact that they finance what others do not and the willingness of EKNs to take on sensitive issues is highly recognized by the local CSOs. However, the EKNs' funding is not strategic, as it does not address key concerns regarding PILA capacity, such as CSOs' questionable political and social legitimacy due to the weak links with their constituency. Furthermore, the EKNs' support is often more organizational, rather than being aimed at financing concrete PILA campaigns.

Reader's guide
Section 11.1 discusses how donors often tend to pursue their own priorities, while neglecting local agendas. Furthermore, this section points out that it is important for donors to pay more attention to supporting the enabling environment and to reflect on the role of traditional CSOs when it comes to PILA.

Section 11.2 shows that asymmetric relations between donors and Southern CSOs challenge capacity development, because of issues regarding ownership and accountability.

Section 11.3 points out that CSOs appreciate support by the Netherlands' embassies, as they often fund what other donors are not willing to fund. However, IOB finds that the support is not strategic, as it is not aimed at structural PILA capacity development.

11.1 Donors support their own priorities, neglecting local agendas

The attention for politics in development aid gained momentum in the 1990s when donors started viewing political and socio-economic development as mutually reinforcing processes and started promoting good governance. Donors had two rationales for supporting good governance: firstly an instrumental one – improving the effectiveness of aid, and secondly an intrinsic rationale – democracy as a value in itself.

Donors incorporate the political dimension in their work mostly through applying aid conditions in combination with supporting governance and institutional development. Carothers and De Gramont (2013) raise the question of how far the aid community – donors and their Northern NGDOs – has moved along the road to politics. In answering this question they observe that:

> 'Mainstream aid organizations have been slow to integrate political goals into their socio-economic programs, treating their work on democracy and governance as a distinct sector rather than an integral element of all areas of development. This leaves many large scale aid activities only lightly touched by political objectives.'

The authors give two reasons for this slow progress.

> 'First, Western donor governments have a wide range of interests that shape their relations with governments in the developing world, spanning a host of economic, strategic diplomatic, cultural and other issues. Second, mainstream organizations are still unsure about or actively against the view that helping countries improve their political life should be a priority for development aid, no matter what the official policy documents emanating from their organizations say.'

Consequently, the authors conclude that 'behind the doors of development agencies that formally support political goals as a way of furthering socioeconomic progress lie widely different beliefs about the wisdom and feasibility of such an approach' (Carothers & de Gramont, 2013).

The *Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue* identifies a number of constraints in donor policies that fit in the analysis above (ITAD & COWI, 2012). The report concludes that: (1) donors recognize CSOs' role, but their funding instruments are not yet fully appropriate; (2) donor driven agendas may be at variance with CSO priorities; (3) focusing on 'results' may lead to less funds for CSO policy dialogue; and (4) there is a (growing) challenge for donors to respond to the changing nature of civil society engagement. Menocal and Sharma (2008) also conclude that donor's increased pressure to deliver quantifiable results means that the focus moves away from supporting behavioral change and power relations. These findings indicate that there is a serious tension between the long-term processes of transforming state-society relations and donors' desires to produce quick results. It implies that donors need to be more realistic about what can be accomplished in the shorter term and have to recognize that transforming state-society relations takes a long time and is not necessarily guaranteed. That most donor interventions have short life spans (3-5 years) thus limits their potential for developing transformative change (Menocal & Sharma, 2008).

The joint donor evaluation, commissioned by Austria, Denmark and Sweden, suggests a necessary shift towards greater attention for supporting the enabling environment for engagement, alongside greater support to CSO programming that facilitates citizen and community empowerment and engagement (ITAD & COWI, 2012). However, legal provisions for participation do not necessarily work, and are certainly not enough to stimulate civic engagement. For example, in Bangladesh progressive laws on participation that mandate citizen participation in local decision-making were enacted, but yet it will not happen unless people feel able to claim the space and are helped to do so productively (ITAD & COWI, 2012). It is important to empower those directly affected by a policy to assume their own agency for influencing policy change. After all, a change in policy at national level does not imply it will be implemented, and therefore some sense of local empowerment in terms of claiming and 'enforcement' capacity is required.

It is an extra challenge for donors and their Northern development partners that they must be aware of the complex nature of advocacy and of models of achieving social and political change (Stalker & Sandberg, 2011). This requires that they follow a strategic, diagnostic approach that should always grow out of an understanding of contextual, socio-historical factors, while bearing in mind the tenuous relationships between capacity and effectiveness. Stalker and Sandberg (2011) also observe that while it is clear that there is a growing demand for advocacy capacity building, there is very little strategic implementation or systematic evaluation taking place.

INTRAC (2013) adds that citizen mobilization, facilitated by social media and mobile communications, often bypasses the formal CSOs, presenting a challenge to donors. According to INTRAC (2013), this requires a readiness on the part of donors to support more fluid forms of civil society association, unconventional civic alliances and processes of change rather than individual CSOs.

Brian Pratt (2009), the former director of INTRAC, is rather critical about the role of Northern NGDOs in respect of capacity development and fears that they only pay lip service to capacity development, despite their rhetoric. Pratt is particularly critical when foreign agencies devolve part of their implementation to local groups as 'partners' and 'capacity

development becomes merely a glorified term for subcontracting'. Such relationships allow very little real power to be exercised by the subcontractors, who have limited flexibility on how they assess or prioritize needs, engage in the process of program design, or make changes to the program if they feel it to be appropriate. Explaining this practice, Pratt (2009) observes that Northern NGDOs 'are unable to see that their own growth and coverage is never as important as support for sustainable local organizations engaged in the political, social and economic life of their own countries and communities'.

11.2 Asymmetric relations between donors and Southern CSOs challenge capacity development

It is generally accepted that capacity development can only be self-sustained if it is anchored in endogenous processes. Those processes start within the organization and gain traction when an organization defines its identity, its position in society, its contribution to social change and the ways it has of realizing its business and capacity development. External support to endogenous capacity development depends on a relationship of trust and mutuality (IOB, 2011). For support to be effective it assumes that CSOs express a request for support on the basis of their plans, and only accept support that is of sufficiently high professional standard and fits their priority needs. Endogenous processes also assume that CSOs incorporate their practical experiences in their policies through reflection and learning by means of systematic planning, monitoring and evaluation (PM&E). However, endogenous development is not easily pursued when a CSO's future depends on donor funding. Measures can be taken to contain this dilemma, but are unlikely to guarantee endogenous capacity development, as the funding and associated donor dependencies involve asymmetries in the relationship (IOB, 2011). Donors thus have to be extremely careful to leave enough room to national CSOs and local partners to design their own ToC, and not limit their possibilities by predetermined choices. The impact of the political and economic situation reiterates the importance of local leaders and locally legitimate CSOs and coalitions in bringing about change.

CSO PILA in Kenya[34] is mainly donor funded. Donors generally support CSOs whose work aligns with their own priorities. Donors that were mentioned by CSOs include embassies (such as the EKN), the UN, World Bank, DFID, USAID and EU. They either directly fund the organizations or fund through basket funding facilities. For example, Amkeni Wakenya and Uraia are funds that have supported CSOs to engage in civic education, but they also built the institutional capacity of CSOs and improved networking as discussed above. Among the most active donors in the field of democracy and governance are the US, the UK, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Canada, Norway and Finland (De Zeeuw, 2010). Findings in his report on assessing democracy assistance in Kenya show that a considerable part of bilateral assistance is put into large 'baskets', often coordinated by UNDP or specialized financial management agencies, such as KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).
Donor funding in Kenya is decreasing and at risk, given the proposals made by the Kenyan government to set a ceiling of 15% on foreign funding. The CSOs have not put in place

[34] The following paragraphs draw on the Kenya country study, commissioned by IOB.

sufficient mechanisms for local fund raising. Some CSOs conduct consultancies to increase their budget, often for foreign donors or government agencies.

The aid dependency of Mozambique[35] has shaped policymaking, affected government -civil society relations and influenced civil society interventions. Castel-Branco (2008) qualifies Mozambique's dependence on foreign aid as 'multidimensional, structural and dynamic'. It affects the institutional culture, thinking, policies and options of the systems of governance, as well as the interactions between agents, public policies, the financing of such policies, et cetera. Many analysts contend that aid dependency has led government and CSOs to be more accountable to donors than to the parliament, civil society and citizens. While partially correct, this view does not take into account the role of donors in promoting institutional and legislative reforms for promotion of good governance and accountability.

Emerging donors, such as Brazil, China, India, and South Africa, provide investment, loans and technical assistance under the framework of South-South cooperation or triangular cooperation without the conditionality imposed by OECD-DAC donors (ECOSOC, 2008). It is not clear what the position of emerging donors is on support to civil society. For Mozambique, two issues are certain: (1) CSOs from 'emerging donor countries' have played an important role in South-South cooperation as part of initiatives supported by their home governments and by multilateral and bilateral international development agencies, for example Brazil in Mozambique on HIV/AIDS; and (2) the engagement of these donors with Mozambique and other countries, particularly in the extractive sector, has sparked protests and transnational solidarity movements between civil society groups of involved countries, some of which focus on building Mozambican CSOs' social mobilization and PILA capacity (Taela, 2011).

In general, donor support to civil society in Mozambique has focused on building organizational and programmatic capacity of both strong and well-established and new and weaker organizations, including components of experience sharing and synergy building. Support to civil society in Mozambique was channeled through INGOs from the donor's home country (e.g. AGIR) and through international consultancy companies (e.g. DIÁLOGO). Other types of funding were reduced significantly. The scope of support ranged from small short-term projects (1-2 years) to medium-term support to CSOs' strategic plans (which typically cover 4-5 years). Support through CSOs focuses on the implementation of social accountability mechanisms and mediation of citizens' engagement with service providers.

Despite efforts to increase the coverage of civil society support in Mozambique, there are marked geographical inequalities with a sharp urban-rural discrepancy in civil society's access to resources and capacity. Initiatives to strengthen the media, trade unions and other groups are still incipient. There is a tendency on the part of donors to equate civil society with NGDOs, and support has generally focused on professionalized organizations.

In Mozambique, donors have privileged access to policymakers and to information about government policies, strategies and programs. Donors have fostered dialogue between

[35] The following paragraphs draw on the Mozambique country study, commissioned by IOB (Annex 6).

government and civil society by demanding the creation of spaces for participation of civil society actors by the government, as well as by strengthening CSOs' capacity to influence and monitor policy change.

While international commitments and pressure[36] as well as the government's own interests contributed to the emergence of formal spaces for policy dialogue, they did not necessarily translate into increased openness to civil society and to alternative ideas.

11.3 EKN's support is much appreciated although it is not strategic

The CSO's in both Kenya and Mozambique appreciate the support they received from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) and express that it was important for them. They perceive it as enabling and based on trust; one interviewee in Mozambique indicated that 'the Dutch financed what nobody else would finance, which are precisely those things an organization needs to operate (an office, salaries, electricity, et cetera)'. Similarly, another interviewee mentioned that the funding provided by the Embassy enabled them to focus on their work by freeing them from having to seek complementary sources of income, thus contributing to improving the quality of their work. The trust aspect is related to working relationships and the general sense that the Embassy believes in the potential of the CSOs it funds and allows them to be creative and innovative in their approaches. At the same time, the embassies are strict on compliance with submission of reports, including financial management aspects. Some of the CSOs in Mozambique consider themselves 'sons and daughters of the Dutch', given the prominent role of the embassy and Dutch NGDOs (specifically Hivos, Oxfam Novib and SNV) in their emergence.

The EKN's support enables CSOs to gain experience with PILA and to learn from it. But two remarks are in order. First of all, most of the supported activities concern research and other activities that are not necessarily linked to or part of a PILA campaign. Secondly, the CSOs are not systematic in their reflection and learning, which poses the risk that their capacity development is not adequate for meeting their PILA objectives.

Support from the EKNs is not always strategic, as it does not take the role CSOs play in relation to societal problems, and how the embassies' support may help strengthen that role, into account. Selection of civil society partners takes place through the network of embassy staff and the contacts they have with CSOs. Dutch embassies do not organize tenders or call for proposals

[36] Some policy dialogue spaces were created to comply with the conditions defined by international financing institutions and multilateral/bilateral agencies and funds. For instance, the development observatories receive criticism from these institutions about the lack of consultation and civil society participation in the development of the first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, while the spaces created for civil society participation in the 'National AIDS Response' were one of the requirements of multilateral/bilateral agencies and funds for supporting the National AIDS Council.

and grants are awarded without much competition among CSOs. Most selected CSOs are based in the capital and are well connected to the donors, few are based in the regions.

The EKNs generally have considerable means to support civil society in developing countries through direct funding[37] (see Table 2).

Table 2 Overview of direct funding by embassies

Country	Kenya	Mozambique	Ethiopia	Total (18 countries)[38]
Total amount of DF per year*	6.4	7.7	12.4	142.2
Total amount of DF to local NGDOs per year*	2.4 (37.5%)	2.9 (37.7%)	2.7 (21.8%)	49.8 (35%)

** Average per year over the period 2008-2012 in EUR million.*

According to the IOB report on direct funding (2014), the largest proportion of expenditure by directly funded NGDOs went towards service delivery projects (69%), while the least funds went to civil society building (11%). The number of local NGDO projects in the 'civil society building' category was large, but they only had relatively small budgets.

The embassies can utilize a range of funding modalities, including project, program or institutional support. In Mozambique for example, the embassy used both project and core funding modalities to contract local NGDOs. It preferred core funding, because of the better alignment with the principles of donor coordination and ownership expressed in the Paris Declaration (IOB, 2014). According to IOB's findings, embassies made careful considerations regarding the selection of funding modalities. For example, in Ethiopia and Mozambique, core funding was considered the most suitable modality. It involves less of an administrative burden, and partners are better able to pursue their own agenda. In Sudan and Benin, on the other hand, project funding was preferred because it was less expensive, involved less dependency of NGDOs on external funding, addressed specified goals, and required limited involvement.

CSOs are particularly appreciative of the EKN's public demonstration of support to CSO causes. This meant including the PILA issues that CSOs are working on in policy dialogue and speeches, participating in CSO events, convening spaces that bring together CSOs, facilitating interaction with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs and offering its premises for CSO events. In doing so, the EKN encouraged CSO professionals to continue their work and it conveyed a message to the government and the general public about the importance of the work of CSOs.

37 The following section is based on chapters 3 and 4 and Annex 10 of the IOB evaluation report on direct funding (2014).

38 Direct funding is provided by Netherlands embassies in more than 80 countries around the world. Many of these countries are not developing countries, whereas the 18 selected countries are all partner or transition countries. Therefore, the IOB evaluation of direct funding (2014) can be considered to be representative only for the portfolio of directly funded programs in partner and transition countries.

12

Methodology

This chapter provides an updated summary of the Terms of Reference (ToR) that were designed for the conduct of this evaluation (see Annex 2).

Section 12.1 presents the design of the evaluation.

Section 12.2 discusses how PILA effectiveness and capacity can be assessed.

Section 12.3 shows how the evaluation was implemented and discusses the limitations encountered.

Lastly, section 12.4 discusses how IOB facilitated learning throughout the evaluation process.

12.1 Evaluation design: focus, case selection and contribution analysis

The objective of the evaluation is to generate conclusions on effectiveness and success/ impeding factors and, based on these conclusions, draw lessons that fulfil the learning purpose of the evaluation.

The three main evaluation questions to be answered are:

1. How does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs support policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy (PILA)?
2. What evidence is there for the effectiveness of PILA strategies/programs in influencing policy in the public and private sector that is supportive of poverty reduction, justice and sustainable inclusive development? What factors explain levels of effectiveness?
3. How does Southern CSOs' capacity to practice PILA at national or global level develop and how does the support provided by Northern (Dutch) organizations influence that capacity development? How can Northern organizations best support Southern CSOs' capacity to practice PILA in the future?

These three broad questions were further elaborated with detailed questions in the general Terms of Reference of this evaluation (Annex 2).

Focus and case selection

The evaluation covers the 2008-2014 period. The evaluation focuses on support provided directly for PILA campaigns, but will also take into account support provided for creating the supporting functions and direct involvement with decision-makers (see Figure 2).

The evaluation selected illustrative country and thematic case studies that serve the learning goal of this evaluation. IOB does not claim that these cases are representative.

The initial choice for Ethiopia and Mozambique, made because of their inclusion in the IOB evaluation of direct funding (IOB, 2014) and their presumed differences in the enabling environment[39], had to be abandoned because of difficulties with preparations of the study in Ethiopia. Consequently, the Ethiopia study was limited to a background study and Kenya was included as a full-fledged case study. The legislative and political context for CSOs to operate is quite restrictive in Ethiopia, while both Kenya and Mozambique score approximately the same on these criteria and are supposed to be more open and conducive for civil society to bring forward its interests and concerns (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2014).

Besides the country case studies, the evaluation covers three PILA campaigns in relation to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that are currently in the news and in line with the policy of the minister for Foreign Trade and Development. To maintain a sufficient level of uniformity to compare experiences across the cases, IOB limited the research to CSR in relation to labor conditions. Within this thematic area, IOB selected three cases relating to an influential (Dutch) organization that was involved in PILA strategies relevant to the key event. Each organization was co-financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Cases that qualified and were selected include factory safety in the textile sector in Bangladesh (Rana Plaza), working hours and overtime in IT electronics in China, and the right to organize in the coalmining industry in Colombia.

Methodology

The main task of this evaluation, determining the links between policy influencing activities (outputs) and any change in policy (outcome), is a methodological challenge, as policy changes are highly complex and shaped by a multitude of interacting forces and actors. They are therefore anything but linear or rational processes. To address this problem the evaluation where possible applied the principles of contribution analysis (Mayne 2001, 2008, 2011), combined with stakeholder analysis, as these were considered the most suitable and doable methods. The aim of contribution analysis was to critically construct a 'contribution story', which builds up evidence to demonstrate the contribution made by an intervention, while also establishing the relative importance of other influences on outcomes. Besides claims of CSOs themselves, the research endeavored to triangulate these claims with PILA targets and independent informants. Critical in this approach were the interviews with independent key informants that were knowledgeable about the lobby target and change processes that took place, but were not involved directly with any of the advising or campaigning CSOs. The report is limited to the presentation of only the major changes in agenda setting or policies, of which there is reliable evidence that the CSOs involved made relevant and substantial contributions.

39 Based on the CIVICUS Enabling Environment Index (EEI), the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2014 and the Freedom House report '*Freedom in the World 2014*'.

12.2 Assessing PILA effectiveness and PILA capacity

As mentioned in chapter 2 of this report, IOB felt it was necessary to revise the generic ToC, which was developed during the preparatory phase of the evaluation, based on the findings of the evaluation (see Figure 2 for the revised version).

At the level of the supporting functions IOB included 'strong parliament'. From the country studies in Mozambique and Kenya, it became clear that the parliament is rather weak in terms of influencing government policy. A strong parliament can be an ally for CSOs to pressure governments and influence agendas and policies. This was the case in the study on CSR, where Dutch parliament plays an important role by asking questions to members of the cabinet. As a follow-up to these questions, IOB observed interventions of the Dutch minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation that support the claims of the Dutch NGDOs. IOB also added 'freedom of assembly and association' to 'freedom of expression', as these elements are of critical importance for civil society to fulfill its roles, although they are increasingly under pressure.

Furthermore, IOB included 'enhanced capacity to conduct PILA' as a separate results level, because capacity is in fact a potential, which does not necessarily results in outputs, for example in case of a restrictive environment.

When it comes to assessing PILA effectiveness, it is important to realize that policy influencing may involve different strategies (see Figure 1).

One way to categorize the strategies is to distinguish between: (1) 'inside' and 'outside' track strategies, as shown on the horizontal axis; and (2) approaches that are led by evidence and research versus those that primarily involve values and interests, as shown on the vertical axis. This approach sets out four possible strategies (I-IV). Inside-track strategies work closely with decision-makers through advising and lobbying (I and III) and entail behind the scenes activities usually directed at collaboration and persuasion. An example could be the organization of a focused roundtable with politicians. Outside-track approaches seek to influence change through advocacy and activism (II and IV) and involve public activities, which are usually directed at pressure and confrontation. Examples of these strategies include public campaigns, demonstrations and strikes. The distinction between evidence/science-based and interest/value-based does not necessarily imply that these categories are completely opposite or exclusive. Certain values can be supported by scientific evidence, and academic research producing evidence is often preceded by an interest in or a value judgment on a specific topic.

It is important to be aware that PILA has a number of specific characteristics:
- it takes place in a contested environment in which the legitimacy of proposed changes, the resources employed and results achieved will be debated;
- it focuses on questions of political power and power structures;

- it focuses on complex and dynamic change, with the consequence that action and reaction are often not directly traceable;
- it often requires a continuous effort to maintain or enlarge space that was initially obtained;
- it leads to change that can manifest itself at different levels.

Most of the time, influencing policy is a long and difficult process with unpredictable results that are influenced by context and many actors and factors. It is therefore important to differentiate between result levels, for example agenda setting, policy change and implementation.

Assessing capacity for PILA

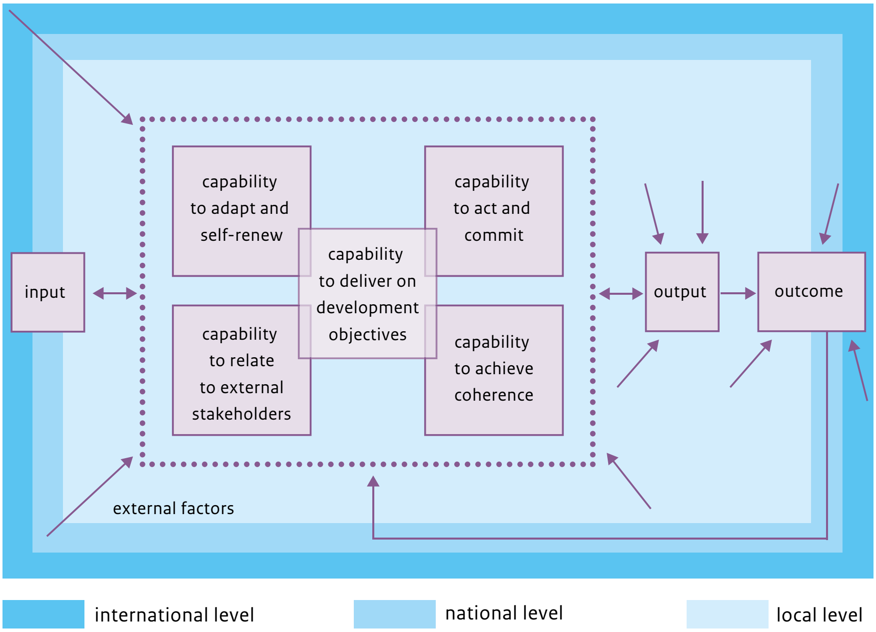
A broadly accepted definition of capacity is that it concerns 'the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully' (OECD, 2006). Another way of expressing this broad definition is that developing countries need appropriate and adequate capacities in order to be able to choose and follow their own development paths (IOB, 2011). From this perspective, capacity is not simply a means to realize immediate results in the health or environment sectors. Rather, it refers to effective systems, institutions, organizations and individuals that are crucial to a country's capability to pursue its development path. This perspective on capacity requires that checks and balances are in place to protect the public interest, that the law is upheld, that public goods and services are delivered, et cetera. But it also requires that the poor, and particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups and their civil organizations, are able to defend their rights by influencing political processes and participating in decision making, to access basic services and to take opportunities to earn a fair income.

At organizational level one could say that capacity is a means for an organization to achieve its objectives. The issue is then 'capacity for what?'. How is capacity development linked to achieving the organization's objectives?

According to Kaplan's perspective, which is broadly accepted in the development community, development is an innate natural process following complex, shifting and often unpredictable pathways (Kaplan, 1999). Development therefore cannot be 'delivered' but it may be facilitated. Kaplan accordingly defines capacity development support as the facilitation of resourcefulness. This has little to do with the transfer of resources and consequently places donors and supporting organizations for new challenges. Successful support for capacity development requires that organizations and donors have a deeper understanding of theories with respect to capacity and its development and of the complexities of development processes.

In order to establish changes in the capacity of single organizations and collaborative associations, such as international and national networks and coalitions, the Netherlands MFA applies the model of the five core capabilities (5Cs) (Figure 3).

Figure 3 *The five core capabilities (5C's)*



Source: IOB (2011).

These five capabilities are closely related, overlap and together contribute to an organization's capacity to achieve its objectives in bringing about social change.

Paul Engel (2014), director of the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), reformulated the 5Cs to make them applicable to assess the capacity development of stakeholders conducting PILA. For the purpose of the evaluation, IOB adopted Engel's formulations as follows:

- CSOs are able to anticipate, decide on a course of action and act upon windows of opportunity for PILA.
- CSOs are able to set objectives and deliver PILA results accordingly.
- CSOs are able to change their PILA strategy and approach and find novel solutions when the situation so demands.
- CSO are able to identify, develop and maintain relations with relevant policymakers, sources of knowledge and information and other relevant 'outsiders' and to mobilize their support when needed.
- CSOs are able to maintain their sense of direction and the coherence of their actions under duress.

Annex 3 'Capacity for PILA' elaborates on the 5Cs with pointers, including for cases where PILA is conducted by networks or coalitions.

12.3 Evaluation implementation

The evaluation was conducted by means of:

- a critical analysis of the support provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- a study into the evidence of effectiveness of PILA and factors that explain degrees of effectiveness; and
- a study on how Northern organizations may best support the policy influencing work of Southern CSOs (success factors and limitations).

Main question 1, about support provided by the Ministry was addressed on the basis of a reconstruction of Dutch (PILA) policy on development cooperation in the 2008-2014 period. The research focused on policy areas where PILA plays a more important role, such as gender equality, human rights, SRHR and the environment, and on the (international) lobbying and advocacy component of MFS II. The evaluation included a literature study and semi-structured interviews.

Main question 2 about effectiveness and explanatory factors was addressed by focusing on the following components:

- a review of available literature, including evaluation reports that do not relate to support provided by the Netherlands. A literature review to identify academic writing not related to development cooperation and create an overview of how CSOs in developing regions can increase the effectiveness and impact of their PILA activities (Annex 5);
- a review of evaluation reports relating to Dutch support;
- two country studies in Kenya and Mozambique and a background study for Ethiopia (for the country study in Mozambique, see Annex 6);
- three case studies of PILA campaigns in relation to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) supported by the Ministry (Annex 7);
- an evaluation report on the lobbying and advocacy component in MFS II (Annex 8);
- IOB reports and background information on gender equality (MDG3), SRHR, human rights, et cetera.

Insights about effectiveness of support for PILA capacity development (question 3) were mainly drawn from the two country studies.

Limitations of the evaluation

Given its learning goal, the evaluation did not impose accountability on the effectiveness of Dutch financial support or measure efficiency. The selected case studies therefore did not need to aim for optimal representativeness.

Implementation of the evaluation took place according to the ToR. Assessment of capacity development of the CSOs in Mozambique and Kenya had to be done in broad terms, as the direct support of the Dutch Embassies to these CSOs was not connected to specific capacity

development objectives. Moreover, the CSOs had not recorded their capacity development and the result of their PILA work.

12.4 Learning facilitated by IOB

IOB organized one-day workshops in Kenya and Mozambique to inform the stakeholders and discuss the findings of the country studies with them. Similarly, IOB organized a meeting with informants and stakeholders to discuss the findings of the study *'The effectiveness of Policy Influencing and Lobby on Corporate Social responsibility; Three case studies of PILA activities promoting global labor standards'.*

Furthermore, IOB gave a presentation about the early findings of the evaluation for policy officers of the Ministry and Dutch NGDOs to facilitate incorporation of insights in the newly established strategic partnerships.

Annexes

Annex 1 About IOB

Objectives

The Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) aims to contribute to knowledge of the implementation and impact of Dutch foreign policy. IOB meets the need for independent evaluation of policy and operations in all the policy fields of the Homogenous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS). IOB also advises on the planning and implementation of evaluations falling under the responsibility of the policy departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and its embassies.

IOB's evaluations enable the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation to *give account* to Parliament for their policies and for resources spent. In addition, the evaluations aim to contribute to *learning* by formulating lessons and options for policy improvements that can be incorporated into the Ministry's policy cycle. Insight into the outcomes of implemented policies allows policymakers to devise new policy interventions that are both more effective and better targeted.

Organisation and quality assurance

IOB has a staff of experienced evaluators and its own budget. When carrying out evaluations, IOB calls on specialist knowledge from external experts with knowledge of the topic under investigation. By way of quality control, IOB appoints an external reference group for each evaluation, which includes not only external experts, but also relevant policy-makers from the ministry and other experts. Moreover, for each evaluation IOB appoints several of its own evaluators to act as peer reviewers. IOB's *Evaluation policy and guidelines for evaluation* are available on the website www.iob-evaluatie.nl, hard copies can be requested through the IOB secretariat.

Evaluation programming

IOB consults with the policy departments to draw up a ministry-wide evaluation programme. This rolling multi-annual programme is adjusted annually and included in the Explanatory Memorandum to the ministry's budget. IOB bears final responsibility for the programming of evaluations in development cooperation and advises on the programming of foreign policy evaluations. The themes selected for evaluation respond to requests from the ministry and Parliament and/or are considered relevant to society. IOB actively coordinates its evaluation programming with that of other donors and development organisations.

Approach and methodology

IOB aspires to relevance, high quality and methodological innovation. Whenever possible, the research applies both quantitative and qualitative methods leading to robust impact evaluations. IOB also undertakes systematic reviews based on empirical results relating to priority policy areas. IOB has extended its partnerships with evaluation departments in other countries, for instance through joint evaluations and evaluative knowledge exchanges, undertaken under the auspices of the OECD-Development Assistance Committee Network on Development Evaluation.

Annex 2 Terms of Reference

The ToR can be found here via the IOB website.

Annex 3 Capacity for PILA: the five core capabilities (5Cs) adapted

CSOs need to produce specific outputs in order to conduct successful PILA campaigns. Typical activities at output level might be: policy analysis, research, media advocacy and public awareness raising, grass-roots organizing, coalition building and networking, legal action or lobbying and direct influencing of policy-makers.

The table below provides an overview of the capabilities an organization may need in order to realize its outputs. The pointers in the second column are neither fixed nor exhaustive, as they depend on the answer to the question 'Capacity for what?' The table should therefore not be used as a tick box or as a tool for an organizational capacity assessment. It is intended to illustrate what each of the 5Cs may involve when it comes to effective PILA and to facilitate a proper discussion. After calibration – adjustment to the specifics of the CSO – an adapted version may be used to facilitate the recording of capacity changes of that CSO.

Core capability	Pointers
C1. CSOs are able to anticipate, decide on a course of action and act upon windows of opportunity for PILA.	• Can articulate a vision, including an authentic organizational commitment to PILA; • has a clear PILA Theory of Change, derived from its mission and vision, and has connected a strategic PILA plan; • has a sound communications plan (visibility, branding, outreach, public education, and media relations); • is agile; has strong and sensitive antennae, remains alert, has contingency plans; • can identify and assess feasibilities and opportunities for PILA; • can take decisions and act in a concerted way when circumstances change; • has a culture of risk tolerance; • can clearly and consistently communicate PILA demands; • has committed and stable leadership; • has a legal basis for engaging in binding commitments. **Networks** • Leadership in networks is shared rather than positional; • network members act to satisfy the interests of all members.

Core capability	Pointers
C2. CSOs are able to deliver PILA results accordingly.	• Has staff with: • stakeholder analysis skills, force-field analysis skills; • technical knowledge of the PILA issue; • expertise to assess community needs and assets; • expertise about particular advocacy strategies (e.g. legal, organizing, et cetera); • expertise to identify key actors and their influence in the decision-making processes; • project management skills (HR and Financial); • communication skills; • understanding of how policy works in practice; • has access to solid, local, evidence-based information that is relevant to decision-makers; • can access external knowledge sources; • can guarantee current and future financial and human resource bases, including dependence on external funding; • has access to facilities and equipment. **Networks** • There is a results-driven structure and process; • there is sufficient transparency and data is freely shared and explained.
C3. CSOs are able to change their PILA strategy and approach, and find novel solutions when the situation so demands.	• Is open to learning and has a plan for reflection; • can monitor and assess the effectiveness of PILA in changing policy environments; • can analyze political trends and understand consequences; • maintains and builds networks; • members effectively deal with their diversity and potential power asymmetries and reflect on what this means for effective PILA; • have a willingness to strategically reflect on existing networks and readiness to review cooperation structures if needed; • members ensure that views of less powerful stakeholders are given a voice.
C4a. CSO are able to identify, develop and maintain relations with their constituency (the poor, beneficiaries, members, et cetera), and represent them. *C4b. CSOs are able to identify, develop and maintain relations with relevant policymakers and other relevant 'outsiders' and can mobilize their support when needed.*	• Has credibility and wide appeal in the community and with its constituency; • enjoys political and social legitimacy; • has operational credibility and reliability; • can build and maintain networks with outside actors for the realization of its objectives; • has the ability to draw on varied partners dependent on strategic shifts; • can build and manage relationships with media and policymakers; • is willing to seek and listen to other views; • has relevant national and international networks; • has mechanisms to mobilize resources.

Core capability	Pointers
C5. CSOs are able to maintain their sense of direction and coherence of their PILA actions under duress.	• Ensures coherence between ambition, vision and strategy; • works with a set of organizational principles, operational/HRM guidelines/manuals; • can consistently apply a style of management that fits the organization; • has consensus building and persuasion skills; • can maintain flexible objectives without losing sight of long-term goals; • can recognize its own limitations and sets realistic (intermediate) goals. **Networks** • Attitudes of respect and trust are present, avoiding stereotyping or reactive behavior (culture); • credit and responsibility for the collaboration is shared among members.

Annex 4 Comparison of budgets available for PILA

Although Dutch expenditures on PILA in the period 2008-2014 are difficult to calculate, rough estimates indicate that the annual budget for the period 2016-2020, under the strategic partnership framework *'Dialogue and Dissent'*, will be higher than it was in the past, even if the percentage of MFS II budget spent on PILA had been around 40 percent.

The Ministry will make EUR 219 million available annually in the period 2016-2020 for the policy framework *'Dialogue and Dissent'*, which is dedicated to capacity development for PILA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). It is less straightforward to calculate the funds available for PILA in the evaluation period 2008-2014, as there was no dedicated budget. Nevertheless, we estimate that roughly EUR 106 million was spent on PILA annually. It seems unlikely that the percentage of MFS II funds spent on PILA could reach 40 percent, instead of the calculated 10 percent (actually 11.6 percent including the ILA evaluation funds), which means that the future PILA budget is likely to be higher than PILA expenditures in the past.

Below we will explain the estimates on which we base our findings.

Future PILA allocations: 2016-2020
The Ministry will make available **EUR 219 million annually** dedicated to PILA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c). Approximately EUR 185 million of the funding is available for strategic partnerships with (Dutch) NGDOs. From the remainder, an annual EUR 15 million is envisaged to go to an Accountability Fund to be disbursed by the embassies, and EUR 10 million to *Voice*[40], while EUR 9 million has not been allocated yet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013c).

PILA expenditure in the evaluation period: 2008-2014
A rough estimate assumes a combined annual amount of funding for PILA of roughly **EUR 106 million**. As it is less straightforward to calculate the funds available for PILA during the evaluation period without a dedicated budget, we included several components in our estimate, namely: (1) PILA activities funded by the Ministry; (2) funds for PILA based on the ILA evaluation; (3) funds spent on PILA under MFS II, which is broader than cases in the ILA evaluation; and (4) direct funding provided by the embassies.

1. As we mentioned before and explained elaborately in the ToR, Annex 2, we estimate the total budget for **PILA activities sponsored directly by the MFA** over the 7-year evaluation period to be around EUR 325 million, which amounts to **EUR 46.4 million annually**.

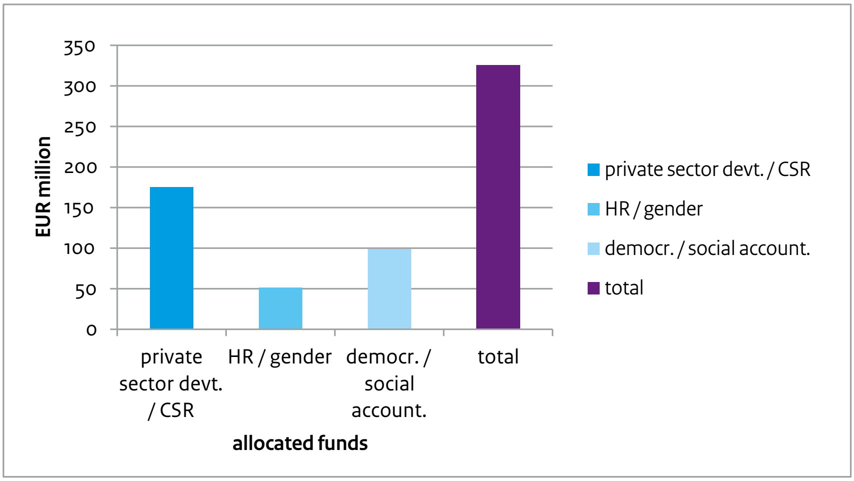
   Since PILA is not categorized as such in the Ministry's financial management data system, IOB had to consult and combine various sources of information in order to establish an overview of the PILA activities and budget. The different policy departments proposed

[40] In the original policy framework, this budget was called Innovation Facility, which was later changed to Inclusion Fund. In July 2015, it was announced that this part of the budget would be named *'Voice: nothing about us without us'*. The decision to adjust the content of the so-called Innovation Facility was the result of parliamentary debate on 22 April 2015, in which preference was voiced to place more emphasis on inclusive development of the hard to reach, most marginalized and discriminated groups.

over 200 activities (projects and programs) to IOB as lobbying and/or advocacy interventions or containing a PILA component. However, only 55 activities could actually be classified as PILA or containing a substantial PILA element, based on an analysis of the objectives, proposed activities and envisaged results in the internal appraisal documents. An analysis by IOB indicates that many of these 55 activities do not have a clear objective with regard to policy influencing. Most interventions seem to focus on building capacity, raising awareness or research and publications.

We identified private sector development / corporate social responsibility, human rights / gender and democratization / social accountability[41] as thematic focus areas for the 55 activities. This categorization is clearly not perfect, as all three categories still include many different specific topics.[42] Figure 4 shows the funds allocated per category.

Figure 4 *Expenditures per sector 2008-2014*



In general, the contract value of the 55 activities varies from EUR 100,000 to EUR 50 million; for approximately 70 percent of the activities the contract value is more than EUR 1 million. The total value of the activities with a substantial PILA component is estimated at around EUR 325 million.

PILA constitutes a sub-component of the project in several of the activities, besides other interventions such as service delivery and technical assistance. For the majority of activities, however, PILA is the main area of intervention, with an expenditure of 100% of the budget allocated to policy influencing or for supporting functions such as knowledge development, freedom of expression or civic engagement.

41 The term social accountability relates to the term domestic accountability, both of which are generally used interchangeably in the literature.

42 For example: PSD/CSR includes environment, trade, employers' and employee organizations, land and agriculture. HR/Gender includes SRHR, women's and LGBTI rights. Democratization/SA includes rule of (international) law, anti-corruption, political participation, peace and stability.

2. Based on the **ILA evaluation**, an estimate can be made about the amount of funding available for ILA within the eight evaluated MFS II programs. For the period 2011-2015, this adds up to EUR 11.3 million for the four projects under the Economic Justice Cluster[43], EUR 2.5 million for the SRHR Alliance in the second thematic cluster[44] and approximately EUR 21.5 million for the three projects under the Protection, Human Security and Conflict Prevention Cluster[45]. This amounts to an estimated total of at least EUR 35.3 million for the evaluated ILA programs under MFS II, meaning roughly **EUR 7 million annually**.

3. The **total MFS II budget** for the period 2011-2015 was EUR 1.9 billion, divided over twenty Alliances (Arensman et al., 2015). For the purpose of comparing the budget for PILA in the evaluation period 2011-2015 with the future PILA budget, we assume that at least 10 percent of the total MFS II budget is spent on PILA-related activities, besides the funds of the ILA evaluation (see point 2 above). This would amount to EUR 186 million (10 percent of EUR 1.9 billion minus the EUR 35 million of the ILA programs) for PILA; amounting to an **annual average of EUR 37.3 million**.

4. The amount of funding spent on PILA from the total MFS II budget would have had to be around 40 percent to come close to the dedicated budget for PILA from 2016. This percentage seems unlikely, if we consider the ratio between the total MFS II budget and the PILA expenditures of the eight alliances in the ILA evaluation under MFS II.[46]

5. According to the IOB report on direct funding (2014), the total amount of **direct funding** in the period 2008-2012 was EUR 710 million. The report further shows that the percentage of total direct funding spent for service delivery is 69 percent, while the remainder is spent on civil society building[47] (11 percent) and other activities (20 percent). It is difficult to draw any hard conclusions on funding allocated for PILA-related activities, but if we limit ourselves to the civil society building category, where PILA activities are most likely to be found, this means approximately EUR 78 million. This amounts to an average of about **EUR 15.6 million per year**.

43 This estimate is actually very conservative, as the Oxfam Novib GROW campaign is not included. According to the evaluation, it was not possible to establish the amount of funding allocated specifically for ILA (see p. 70 of the final ILA evaluation report).

44 For a breakdown per Alliance member, see pp. 327-328 of the final ILA evaluation report.

45 This estimate is based on EUR 3.5 million MFS II funding under the T4C Alliance to ACPF (which actually received another EUR 1.5 million from PLAN Netherlands out of MFS II funds, see p. 431 of the final ILA evaluation report), EUR 8 million under the Communities of Change Alliance (based on EUR 1.5 million per year according to the baseline report, p. 148) and EUR 10 million under the Freedom from Fear Alliance. The final ILA evaluation report states that the ILA allocation in Cordaid's program cannot be determined specifically (total EUR 26 million, pp. 447-448).

46 The total MFS II budget is EUR 380 million per year, while the ILA component amounts to roughly EUR 7 million a year, this means that the spending of 8 alliances evaluated in the ILA evaluation makes up about 2% of the yearly MFS II funds.

47 In the DF evaluation this includes democratic participation and civil society, human rights, legal and judicial development, legislation and political parties, media and free flow of information, women's equality, elections, civilian peace building, conflict prevention and security.

Annex 5 Literature Review: improving the effectiveness of civil society organizations in policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy

The literature review can be found here via the IOB website.

Annex 6 Country study: Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy – Mozambique country study

The country study Mozambique can be found here via the IOB website.

Annex 7 Thematic study: The effectiveness of Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy on Corporate Social Responsibility

The thematic study CSR can be found here via the IOB website.

Annex 8 Thematic study: MFS II Joint Evaluation of International Lobbying and Advocacy – Endline Report

The MFS II ILA evaluation can be found here via the IOB website.

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An increasing number of donors have rediscovered the important role civil society plays in creating the political conditions for achieving sustainable development. The Netherlands follows this international trend. However, the role of civil society and its organizations is not uncontested and little systematic knowledge is available about the effectiveness of donor support. The evaluation concludes that CSOs succeed to various degrees in placing issues higher on the agenda and in influencing policy. However, influencing policy implementation, let alone impact on the ground, is far more difficult to realize. This report provides six lessons to improve effectiveness of support for PILA.

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